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John Burns
April 1909

אורים ותמים

LUX ET VERITAS

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1st Edition

DIRECTIONS AND PERSWASIONS TO A Sound CONVERSION:

For Prevention of that Deceit and Damnation of Souls, and of those Scandals, Heresies, and desperate Apostasies, that are the Consequents of a Counterfeit, or Superficial Change.

By *Richard Baxter.*

LONDON,
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The Preface.

IT is weight ſo unconceivable, that dependeth on the ſoundneſs of our Converſion and Sanctification, that our care and diligence cannot be too great to make it ſure. As the profeſſed Atheiſt, Heathens, and Infidels without; ſo the ſelf-deceiving Hypocrites within the Church, do wilfully caſt away themſelves for ever, by neglecting ſuch a buſineſs of everlaſting conſequence, when they have time, and warnings, and aſſiſtance to diſpatch it. Multitudes live like bruits or Atheiſts, forgetting that they are born in ſinne and miſery, and ſetled in it by wilfull cuſtom, and muſt be Converted or Condemned. Theſe know not (many of them) what need they have of a Converſion, nor what

Converſion or Sanctification is. And ſome that have been Preachers of the Goſpel, have been ſo lamentably ignorant in ſo great a matter, that they have perſwaded the poor deluded people, that it is only the groſs and haynous ſinners, that need Converſion; branding them with the name of Puritans, that will not take a dead Profeſſion joyned with Civility, for true Sanctification; and promiſe Salvation to thoſe, that Chriſt hath with many aſſeverations profeſſed, ſhall not enter into the Kingdom of God. Others that confeſs that a through Sanctification is a neceſſary thing, do delude their ſouls with ſomething that is like it. Hence is the miſery and diſhonour of the Church. Holineſs it ſelf is diſgraced, by the ſins of them that are unholy, becauſe they pretend to that which they have not. Hence it is, that we have thouſands, that call themſelves Chriſtians, that live a worldly, fleſhly life, and ſome of them hating the way of Godlineſs, and yet think they are Converted, becauſe they

are

are ſorry when they have ſinned, and wiſh when it is paſt that they had not done it, and cry God mercy for it; and confeſs that they are ſinners; and this they take for true Repentance: When ſinne was never mortified in their ſouls, nor their hearts ever brought to hate it, and forſake it: But when they have had the profit and pleaſure of ſinne, they are ſorry for the danger, but never regenerate and made New Creatures, by the Spirit of Chriſt. Hence alſo it is, that we have ſuch abundance of meer Opinioniſts, that take themſelves for Religious people. Becauſe they have changed their Opinions, and their parties, and can prate contentiouſly againſt thoſe that are not of their mind, and joyn themſelves with thoſe that ſeem to be the ſtricteſt, they take themſelves to be truly Sanctified! And this makes ſuch gadding from one opinion to another, and ſuch cenſuring, reviling, and diviſions upon that account, becauſe their Religion is moſt in their Opinions, and hath not mortified their

carnal, selfish inclinations and Passions, nor brought them to a holy, heavenly mind. Hence also it is that we have so many sensual, scandalous Professours, that seem to be Religious, but bridle not their tongues, their appetites, or their lusts, but are railers, or backbiters, or tipplers, or gluttons, or filthy and lascivious, or some way scandalous to their holy Profession; because they are strangers to a through-Conversion, but take up with the counterfeit of a superficial change. Hence also we have so many worldlings, that think themselves Religious men; that make Christ but a servant to their worldly interest, and seek Heaven but for a reserve, when Earth forsakes them, and have something in this world that is so dear to them, that they cannot forsake it for the hopes of Glory; but give up themselves to Christ, with secret exceptions and reserves, for their prosperity in the world: And all, because they never knew a sound Conversion, which should have rooted out of their

their Hearts this worldly intereſt, and delivered them up entirely, and abſolutely to Chriſt. Hence alſo it is that we have ſo few Profeſſours, that can lay by their Pride, and bear diſeſteem or injury, and love their enemies, and bleſs them that curſe them, yea, or love their godly friends that croſs them, or diſhonour them. And ſo few that can deny themſelves, in their honour, or any conſiderable thing, for the ſake of Chriſt, and in obedience, and conformity to his will. And all becauſe they never had that ſaving change, that takes down *Self*, and ſets up Chriſt, as Soveraigne in the ſoul. And hence alſo it is that we have in this age ſo many dreadful inſtances of Apoſtaſie: So many reproaching the Scripture, that once they thought had Converted them, and the way of Holineſs, that once they did profeſs; and denying the Lord himſelf that bought them; and all becauſe they formerly took up, with a ſuperficial counterfeit Converſion. O how commonly, and how lamentably

doth this misery appear among Professours in their unsavoury discourse, their strife and envy, on Religious pretenses, their dead formality, their passionate divisions, or their selfish, Proud, and earthly minds! A through Conversion would have cured all this, at least as to the dominion of it.

Having therefore in my call to the unconverted, endeavoured to awaken careless souls, and perswade the obstinate to Turn and Live, I have here spoken to them that seem to be about the work, and given them some *Directions* and *Perswasions*, to prevent their perishing in the birth, and so to prevent that Hypocrisie, which else they are like to be formed into, and the deceit of their hearts, the Errour of their Lives, and the Misery at their Death, which is like to follow. That they live not as those that *flatter God with their mouth, and lie unto him with their tongues, because their heart is not right with him, neither are they stedfast in his Covenant*, Psal. 78. 36, 37.

Lest

Leſt denying deep entertainment, and rooting to the ſeed of Life, or choaking it by the radicated predominant Love, and cares of the world, they wither when the heat of perſecution ſhall break forth, Matth. 13. 20,21,22. *And leſt building on the ſands, they fall when the winds and ſtorms ariſe, and their fall be great*, Matth. 7. 26, 27. *And ſo they go out from us, that they may be made manifeſt that they were not of us: For if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us*, 1 Joh. 2. 19. Look therefore to this great important buſineſs, *and give all diligence to make your calling and election ſure*, 2 Pet. 1. 10. And truſt not your hearts too eaſily, or too confidently. *But turn to the Lord with all your hearts*, (Joel 2. 12.) *Cleave to him Reſolvedly, or with Purpoſe of heart*, (Acts 11. 23.) *And ſee that you ſell all, and buy the Pearl*, (Matth. 13. 46.) *And ſtick not at the price, but abſolutely reſign your ſelves to Chriſt, and turn to him, as Zacheus and other primitive Converts did, ſurrendering all that you have unto his*

Will,

Will, (Luke 19. 8, 9.) *Leave not any root of bitterneſs behind*; *Make no exceptions, or reſerves: but Deny your ſelves*; *Forſake all*; *and follow him that hath led you this ſelf-denying way*; *and truſt to his Blood, and Merits, and Promiſe, for a Treaſure in Heaven, and then you are his Diſciples, and true Chriſtians indeed*, Luke 14. 33. Luke 18. 24, 25. Reader, if thou heartily make this Covenant and keep it, thou ſhalt find that Chriſt will not deceive thee, when the world deceiveth them that choſe it, in their greateſt extremity. But if thou draw back, and think theſe terms too hard, remember that Everlaſting Life was offered thee, and remember why and for what thou didſt reject it. *And if in this lifetime, thou wilt have thy good things, expect to be tormented, when the believing, ſelf-denying Souls are comforted*, Luke 16. 25.

May 29. 1658.

R. B.

The

THE CONTENTS.

Considerations to provoke men to take heed of sticking in a half-Conversion. pag. 1

Direct. 1. *Labour for a right understanding of the true Nature of Christianity, and meaning of the Gospel that must convert.* 32

Direct. 2. *When you understand that which you are called to, search the Scripture, and see whether it be so.* 41

Direct. 3. *Be much in the serious Consideration of the Truths which you understand and believe.* 51

Seven things to be considered. 56

The manner of this Consideration. 79

Twelve Motives to Consideration. 86

Direct. 4. *See that the work of Humiliation be throughly done, and break not away from the Spirit of Contrition before he have done with you: And yet see that you mistake not the Nature and Ends of the work, and that you drive it not on further then God requireth.* 119

Preparatory Humiliation what. ibid.

Sound

Sound Humiliation how known 120.&c.
The Ends and Use of Humiliation. 130
Mistakes about Humiliation to be avoided. 154
Whether it be possible to be too much humbled. 160
How to know when sorrow should be restrained. 163
And when sorrow must be encreased. 167
Motives for submission to a through-Humiliation. 182
Direct. 5. *Close with the Lord Jesus understandingly, heartily and entirely, as he is revealed and offered in the Gospel.* 191
What must be understood of the person of Christ. 192
The Ends of Redemption, to be understood. 195
The Demonstrations of the glory of God in Christ, and to whom. 221
What are the works of Redemption that Christ hath done. 232
The Benefits by Christ procured. The general Benefits. 241
The Benefits proper to Believers. 247
The several termes on which the several Benefits are conveyed. 263
The certainty of all this. 270
How Christ must be received heartily and

and with the will. 272
Christ must be entirely received, and how. 283
Direct. 6. *See that the flesh be throughly mortified, and your hearts taken off the pleasures, profits and honours of the world, and think not of reconciling God and the world, as if you might secure your interest in both.* 299
Direct. 7. *Be sure that you make an absolute Resignation of your selves and all that you have to God.* 306
Direct. 8. *See that you mistake not a meer change of your opinions, and profession and behaviour, for a saving change.* 324
The Markes by which a sound Conversion may be known from a meer opinionative change. 330
Directions to get beyond an opinionative Conversion. 347
Direct. 9. *Acquaint your souls by faith with the glory of the everlasting Kingdome, and see that you take it for your portion, and your end, and from thence let the rest of your actions be animated.* 353
Wherein this Blessedness doth consist. 359
Direct. 10. *Rest not, and count not your selves converted, till God and holiness have your very Love, Desire and Delight: and take*

is not for a saving change, when you had rather live a Worldly and ungodly life, if it were not for the fears of punishment. 363

Direct. 11. *If you would not have the Work miscarry, Turn them this present day and hour without any more delay: where fifty Considerations are given to shame men out of their delayes.* 381

Direct. 12. *Stop not in weak and wavering purposes, and faint attempts: but see that you be groundedly, unreservedly, and firmly, (or habitually) Resolved.* 441

What Resolution is, and by what Deliberations it is caused. The Preparatory common Acts, and the speciall Acts: Illumination, and the Wills Determination how wrought. 442 &c.

The unresolved are unconverted. 450

What Resolution it is that is necessary. 455

Twenty Motives to Resolution 461

Hinderances of Resolution. 505

Two Directions for prosecuting Resolution, that it may hold. 513

The Conclusion. 521.

Errata.

ERRATA.

PAge 1.l.15.for *you* r.*the*. p.41.l.29.r.*it a*. p.15.l. 15.r.*as if it*. p.99.l.5.for *Mal.*r.*Math*. p.51.l.5. for *your* r.*our*. p.56.l.8.for *say* r.*lay*. p.72.l.17.blot out *and*. p.98.l.14.r.*portends*. p.181.l.1.r.*this be?* p.126.l.13.for *confesseth* r.*consenteth*. p.143.l.19.for *work* r.*worth*. p.144.l.6.blot out *that*. p.157.l.8.for *reproachers* r.*reprovers*. p 167.l.21.for *the* r.*then*. p. 170.l.14.for *you* r.*your*. p.171.l.10.for *so* r.*to*. p 174. l.10.for *Judas* r.*Judges with a*. p.176.l.1,2. for *your selves* r.*yours*. l.6.r.*veine*. l.15.*for once* r.*over*. p.177. l.23.r.*you are*. p.205.l.3. for *begin a* r.*beginning*. p. 210.l.3.dele.*hath*. p.215.l.9. for *Premises* r.*Praises*. p.218.l.25. dele *purpose*. p.220.l.20. for *of* r.*so*. p. 229.l.21.for *manage* r.*marriage*. p.242.l.21.for *discern* r *deserve*. p.247.l.13.for *charging* r.*changing*. p.279. l.7.r.*you*. p.294.l.27. for *sanctification* r.*satisfaction*. p.298.l.24.dele *to*. p.307.l.12.for *or* r.*our*. p.309.l.4. r.*pure*, *and*. p.314.l.12.dele *I*. p.319. l.21.r. *it*, *it is*. p.326.l.4.*and*. 7.r.*opinionative*. p.338.l.3.r. *life and*. l.27.for *is* r.*it*. p.339.l.27.r.*party*. p.341.l.19. for *to* r.*made*. p.362. l.7. for 1.r.10. p.432.l.5.r.*learn*. p. 446.l.28.for *the* r.*that*. p.469.l.1. for *any* r. *and*. p. 494.l.7.r.*till then*. p.500.l.3.4.for *handfull* r.*housefull*. p.512. l.5.for *offer* r.*office*. p.517.l.16.r.*so I*. p.524. l.18.for *mystery* r.*misery*.

Directions to Sinners that are purposed to Turn, and are under the Work of Conversion; that it miscarry not.

THe first and greatest matter in the seeking after the salvation of our souls, is to be sure that we lay the *foundation* well, and that the work of *Conversion* be throughly wrought. To this end I have already used many *perswasions* with you unconverted to return, as thinking all further *Directions* vain, till we have *perswaded* men to a *consent* and

willingneſs to practice them. And in the end of that Diſcourſe, I added a few Directions for the uſe of ſuch as are willing to be converted. But becauſe I know that this is a matter of exceeding conſequence, I dare not thus leave it, before I have added ſome *further Directions*, to prevent the *miſcarrying* of this work where it is *begun*. And leaſt I ſhould loſe my labour, through the unpreparedneſs of the Reader; I ſhall firſt give you ſome preparing Conſiderations, which may awaken you to the practice of the *Directions* which I ſhall give you.

Conſider firſt, That *half-Converſions are the undoing of many thouſand ſouls.* If you are but like *Agrippa*, Act. 26.28. *almoſt perſwaded to be Chriſtians*, you will be but *almoſt* ſaved. Many a thouſand that are now paſt help, have had the Word come near them, and caſt them into a fear, and make ſome ſtirre and trouble in their ſouls, awakening their conſciences, and forcing them to ſome good *purpoſes* and *promiſes*; yea, and bringing them to the *performance* of a

half-

half-reformation; But this is not it that will ſerve your turn. Many have been ſo much changed, as not to be *farre from the Kingdom of God*, that yet came ſhort of it, *Mark.* 12. 34. There is no promiſe in Scripture that you ſhall be pardoned if you *almoſt repent* and believe; or be ſaved, if you be *almoſt ſanctified* and obedient: But on the contrary the Lord hath plainly reſolved, that you muſt *turn or die*, though you *almoſt* turn: and repent, or periſh though you *almoſt* repent: and that you ſhall not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, without converſion and a new birth, though you come never ſo near it. God hath reſolved upon the termes of your ſalvation: and it is in vain to hope for ſalvation upon any other termes. God will not change nor come down to your termes; It is you that muſt change and come quite over to his termes, or you are loſt for ever. If you come never ſo near them, you are but loſt men if you come not *up to* them. The Lord well knew what he did, when he made his Covenant and Law, and he impoſed nothing on the ſonnes of men, but what his infinite wiſdom told him, it was fit for him to im-

poſe: and he will not now *compound* with ſinners, and take leſs then he requireth; that is, leſs then the preheminency in their hearts; nor will he ever come down to any lower termes with you, then thoſe which he propoundeth to you in his Goſpel. And therefore poor ſinners as you love your ſouls, do not ſtand dodging and halving with God; but give up your ſelves entirely to him: and do not ſtop at the beginnings of a converſion, but go through with it, till you are become new creatures indeed, or you are undone when you have done all. A half unſound Convert will as certainly periſh as a Drunkard or a Whoremonger; though his torment may not be ſo great.

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2. Conſider alſo, That *if you do not go through with the work when you are upon it, you may perhaps make it more difficult then it was before ever you medled with it*, and make it a very doubtfull caſe whether ever it will be done. As it is with a wound or other ſore; if you tamper with it with ſalves that are not agreeable to it, or are diſorderly applied;

or

or if you skin it over before it be searched to the bottom, it must be opened again, and will cost you double pain before it be cured. Or as I have seen it with some that have had a bone broken, or out of joynt, and it hath been set amiss at first; O what torments were the poor creatures fain to undergo, in having it broken or stretcht and set again! which might have been spared, if it had been throughly done at first. So, if you will be shrinking, and drawing back, and favouring your flesh, and will not go to the quick, you will make your Conversion much more difficult; you must be brought to it again, and fetch your groanes yet deeper then before; and weep over all your former teares: your doubts will be multiplied: your fears and sorrows will be encreased: and all will go sorer with you then at first. O what a case will you be in, when your sores must be lanced a *second* time, and your bones as it were broken again! Then you will wish you had gone through with it at the first.

Yea, perhaps you may put God to it to fetch you in by some sharpe affliction, and send out so boisterous and chur-

liſh a Meſſenger to call you home, as may make you wiſh you had hearkened to a more gentle call: When the Sheep will ſtraggle, the Dog muſt be ſent to affright them home. Many a fooliſh ſinner makes light of the gentle invitations of grace, and they ſtand hovering between their ſins and Chriſt, and ſometimes they have a mind to turn, and the next temptation they are off again, and then they come on again coldly and with half a heart; and thus they ſtand trifling with the God of Heaven, till he is fain to take another courſe with them, and reſolves to uſe ſome ſharper means: And when he layeth them under his rod, and they can neither fly from him, nor reſiſt him, but ſee that their lives and ſouls are at his mercy, then they begin to look about them, and ſee their folly and change their minds. You can tarry, and delay, and dally with the dreadfull God, in the time of your proſperity, and we may ask you over and over whether you will turn, before we can have a hearty anſwer: But what will you do when God ſhall begin to frown, and when he takes you in hand by his unreſiſtible power, and lets looſe upon you the terrours of

his

his wrath? Will you then make as light of his mercy as you do now? Have you not read *Dan.* 5. 6. how ſmall an apparition of his anger, did make a carouzing King look pale, and his joynts to tremble, in the midſt of his jovialty? A *Manaſſeth* will bethink himſelf and come in when he is laid in irons, though he could ſet light by God before, 2 *Chron.* 33. 13. If *Jonah* will runne away from God, he can ſend a boiſterous Meſſenger to arreſt him, and caſt him as it were into the belly of Hell, and make him cry for mercy to him that he diſobeyed. So, if you will ſtand trifling with God, and will not by fair meanes be perſwaded to yeeld and come away, you may ſhortly look to hear from him in another manner: for he hath a voice that will make the proudeſt face look pale, and the ſtubborneſt heart that is to tremble. If an idle ſtubborn Child will not learn nor be ruled, the Maſter or Parent will teach him with the rod, and give him a laſh, and ask him, *will you yet learn?* and another laſh and ask him, *what ſay you now, will you yet obey?* So will God do by you, if he love you, and mean to ſave you: When he hath taken away

your wealth, your friends, your children, will you *then* hearken to him, or will you not? When you lie groaning on your couch, and all your parts are overwhelmed with paines, and death begins to lay hands upon you, and bids you *now come and answer for your rebellions and delayes before the living God*, What will you do *then?* Will *you* turn or not? O the lamentable folly of sinners, that put themselves to so much sorrow, and create calamity for themselves! When sickness comes, and death draws near, you beg, and cry, and groan, and promise: When you feele the rod, what Christians will you then be? And why not without so much adoe? You then think God deales somewhat hardly with you: And why will you not turn then by gentler means? You might spare your selves much of this misery if you *would*; and you *will* not. Is it a seemly thing for a man to be *driven* to Heaven by scourges? Is God so bad a Master, and Heaven so bad a place, that you will not turn to them, and mind them, and seek them, till there be no remedy, and you are as it were driven to it against your wills? Is the world such an Inheritance,

and

and ſinne ſo good a thing, and the fleſh or devil ſo good a Maſter, that you will not leave them till you are whipt away? What a ſhamefull unreaſonable courſe is this?

Well ſirs, the caſe is plain before you. Turn you muſt at one time or other, or be the firebrands of Hell. And ſeeing it is a thing that muſt be done, were it not beſt for you to take the eaſieſt and the ſureſt way to do it? Why this is the eaſieſt and the ſureſt way; even to ſtrike while the iron is hot, before it coole again; and to go through with it when God doth move you and perſwade you; If you love your fleſh it ſelf, do not put him to take up the rod, and fetch you home by ſtripes and terrours.

But that's not the worſt: For it will ſorely hazard the work it ſelf, and conſequently your ſalvation, if you do not go through with it, at the firſt attempt. I know there is many a one that hath been converted and ſaved, after many purpoſes and promiſes and half-converſions. But yet I muſt tell you, that this is a very dangerous courſe. For you do not know when you grieve the Spirit of grace, and ſet ſo light by mercy when it

it is offered you, whether that Spirit may not utterly forſake you, and leave you to your own ungodly wills, and let you take your luſts and pleaſures, and ſay, [*Let this wretch be filthy ſtill: let him keep his drunkenneſs, his companions, his worldlineſs, and the curſe of God with them, till he have tried what it is that they will do for him: Let him follow his own conceits, and the pride and obſtinacy of his own heart, till he find whether they will bring him: Let him ſerve the fleſh and the world, till he underſtand whether God or they be the better maſter. Seeing he will not be wiſe on earth, let him learn in hell, and let torments teach him, ſeeing mercy might not teach him.*] O poor ſoul! what a caſe art thou in, if this ſhould once be the reſolution of God?

Moreover, you may eaſily know that the longer you ſtay, the more leaſure you give the devil to aſſault you, and to try one way when he cannot prevail by another, and to ſtrengthen his temptations: Like a fooliſh Souldier, that will ſtand ſtill to be ſhot at, rather then aſſault the enemy.

And the longer you delay, the more your ſin gets ſtrength and rooting. If you

you cannot bend a twig, how will you be able to bend it when it is a Tree? If you cannot pluck up a tender plant, are you likely to pluck up a ſturdy Oak. Cuſtom gives ſtrength and root to vices. *A Blackmoor may as well change his ſkin, or a Leopard his ſpots, as thoſe that are accuſtomed to do evil, can learn to do well*, Jer. 13.23.

If you ſtick at Converſion as a *difficult* matter to day, it will be more difficult to morrow, or the next moneth, and the next year, then it is now.

Yea, the very reſiſtance of the Spirit doth harden the heart, and the delayes and triflings of the ſoul, do bring it to an inſenſibility, and boldneſs in ſinne, and drive away the fear of God from the heart. *Now* it may be you are ſomewhat awakened, and begin to ſee that you muſt turn or die: but if you trifle and delay, this light may be gone, and leave you in greater darkneſs then before: and the voice that now awakeneth you may be ſilent, and leave you to fall aſleep again.

Moreover, you know that you are uncertain of the continuance of the Goſpel. You know not whether you ſhall have ſuch

such lively serious Preachers, as you have now: Nor you know not whether you shall have such godly neighbours, and company to encourage you, and help you in the work. God will remove them one after another to himself, and then you will have fewer Prayers for you, and fewer warnings, and good examples, and perhaps be left wholly to the company of deceived ungodly fools, that will do nothing but hinder and discourage you from Conversion. And you are not sure that Religion will continue in that reputation, as now it is in. The *Times* may turn, before *you* turn: and godliness may become a scorn again, and it may be a matter of suffering, and may cost you your lives to live as the servants of Christ must do. And therefore if you stop at it now as a difficult thing, when you have all the helps and encouragements that you can expect, and the way to Heaven is made so fair; and when Magistrates, and Ministers, and Neighbours, are ready to encourage and help you; what will you do in times of persecutions and discouragement? If you cannot turn when you have all these helps and means, what will you

you do when they are taken from you? If you cannot row with the ſtream, how will you row againſt it? If you dare not ſet to Sea, when you have wind, and tide, and ſunſhine; what will you do in ſtormes and tempeſts, when all is againſt you! O what would ſome of your fore-fathers have given to have ſeen the daies that you ſee! How glad would many a thouſand in other Countries of the world be, to have but the helps to Heaven that you have? Never look to have the way fairer and eaſier while you live. If you think Heaven is offered you at too deer a rate now, you may even let it go, and try whether Hell be better: for the next offer is like to be upon harder termes rather then eaſier. If you cannot now find in your hearts to turn and live a holy life; What would you have done in the daies of the Apoſtles, or antient Chriſtians? and, What would you have done in *Spain* or *Italy*, where it would coſt you your lives? He that will not be Converted *now*, but thinks the termes of grace too hard, is ſo impious a deſpiſer of Chriſt and Heaven, that it is no wonder if God reſolve that he ſhall never taſte

taſte of the ſalvation that was offered him, *Luk.* 14.24.

Moreover, you know upon what uncertainties you hold your lives, you have no aſſurance of them for an hour: but you are ſure that they are paſſing away while you delay. And will you trifle then in a work that muſt be done? What a caſe are you in, if death find you unconverted? The heart of man is not able now to conceive the miſery of your caſe. How dare you venture to live another day in an unconverted ſtate, leaſt death ſhould find you ſo? Are you not afraid when you lie down at night, and afraid when you go out of your doors in the morning, leaſt death ſurprize you before you are converted? If you be not, it's long of your deadneſs and preſumption.

And I would fain hear what it is that ſhould thus ſtop you. What are you afraid of? Is God an Enemy, that you are loath to come to him? Is the devil a Friend that you are ſo loath to leave him? Is ſinne a Paradiſe? Is Holineſs a Miſery? Is it pleaſanter life to love your money, or your lands, or your meat and drink, and luſts, then to

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love the moſt bleſſed God, the Creatour of the World, the life of our Souls, and our Eternal Felicity? Is it better to pamper a carcaſs that muſt ſhortly ſtink as the dung, then to provide for a living immortall ſoul? Whether do you think that Earth or Heaven will be the more glorious and durable felicity?

What is it ſirs that you ſtick at, that you make ſo many delayes before you'l turn? Is there any difficulty in the point? Do you think it a hard queſtion whether you ſhould turn or not? Why how can you be ſo blind? Do you ſtand pauſing upon the buſineſs, as it were a doubt, whether God or the world were better, and whether ſinne or holineſs, Chriſt or death, Heaven or Hell, were to be preferred? I pray you Conſider; Can you reaſonably think that Converſion will do you any harm? Can it bring you into a worſe condition then you are in? Sure you cannot fear ſuch a thing: You are in your blood; you are dead in ſinne; you are children of wrath, while you are unconverted: you are under the curſe of the Law of God; you are the ſlaves of the devil, you are the heirs of hell,

hell, and under the guilt of all your ſinnes; your life is a continued rebellion againſt God; you are employed every day in the deſtroying of your ſelves, in kindling the flames that muſt everlaſtingly torment you, and laying in fewell for the perpetuating of your miſery; and fighting againſt your friends that would deliver you, and unthankfully abuſing Chriſt and grace, and Miniſters, and Friends that would ſave your ſouls. This is the condition that every one of you is in till you are converted. And can you fear leaſt Converſion would bring you into a worſe condition then this? Sirs, theſe Truths are ſure and plain: and if yet you ſtick at it, your errour is ſo palpably groſs, that unleſs you are mad men, I may be bold to ſay, it is a wilfull errour. And if you *love* to be deceived, and wilfully chooſe a lie, you muſt take that you get by it.

3. Conſider further, That *half-Converſions do often prove an occaſion of deluding mens ſouls, and making them quiet in a miſerable ſtate, and ſo of keeping them*

them from being converted to the laſt. If you had never done any thing in it, you would more eaſily be perſwaded that your caſe is bad, and that there is ſtill a neceſſity of your change. But when you have had ſome convictions, and troubles of mind, and fears and ſorrows, and ſo have fallen into an outſide partiall reformation, and now are perſwaded that you are truly converted, when it is no ſuch matter; What a dangerous impediment to your Converſion may this prove? And all becauſe you ſlubber over the work, and cut it off before it reacheth to ſincerity, and ſtrive againſt the workings of the Spirit, and break away from your Phyſicain before he hath done the cure, and would not follow it on to the end. I know that a half-Converſion, if it be *known* to be no more, is much better then none, and doth often prepare men for a ſaving work. But when this half-Converſion is taken to be a true and ſaving change, as too commonly it is, it proves one of the greateſt impediments of ſalvation. When ever Chriſt ſhall afterwards knock at your door, you will not know him, as thinking that he dwells with you al-

ready. If you read any Books that call on you to be converted, or hear any Preachers that call on you to turn, you have this at hand to couſen your ſelves with, and fruſtrate all: You'l think, *This is not ſpoken to me: For I am Converted already.* O how quietly do ſuch poor deluded ſinners, daily read and hear their own doom and miſery; and never once dream that they are the men that are meant, and therefore are never diſmayed at the matter. This formeth you into a ſtate of hypocriſie, and makes the courſe of your duties and your lives to be hypocriticall. If another man that knows himſelf to be ſtill unconverted, do but read the threatnings of the Word againſt ſuch, or hear of the terrours of the Lord from a Miniſter, he may be brought to confeſs that this is his own caſe, and ſo to perceive the miſery of his condition. But when ſuch as you do read and hear theſe things, they never trouble you, for you think that they do not touch you: You are Scripture-proof, and Sermon-proof; and all by the deluſion of your *half*-Converſion. O how zealouſly will ſuch a man cry out againſt the ſinnes of others!

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and tell them of their miſery, and perſwade them to turn, and ſhew them the danger that is near them if they do not; and in the mean time little thinks that this is his own caſe, and that he ſpeaks all this againſt his own ſoul. How will ſuch men applaud a Sermon that drives at the Converſion of a ſinner, and that tels them their miſery while they are unconverted? O thinks he, this touched ſuch and ſuch: I am glad that ſuch a man and ſuch a man heard it: And he little thinks that it as nearly touched himſelf. How ſmoothly will he go on in any diſcourſe againſt wicked unregenerate men, as *David* heard the Parable of *Nathan*, and it never once entreth into their thoughts that they ſpeak all this againſt themſelves; till the Judge ſhall tell them when it is too late, *Thou art the man.* It will turn not only the ſtream of your thoughts into hypocriſie and ſelf-deceit, but alſo the ſtream of your ſpeeches to others; yea, and the current of your prayers, and all the reſt of your religious performances. When in confeſſion, you ſhould acknowledge and lament an unregenerate carnall ſtate, you will only confeſs that you have the infir-

mities of the Saints, and that you have this or that ſinne, which yet you think is mortified. When you ſhould importunately beg for *Renewing* grace, you will beg only for *ſtrengthning* grace, or aſſurance: When you ſhould be labouring to *break* your hearts, you will be ſtudying to *heal* them: and will be hearkning after preſent comforts, when you have more need of godly ſorrow. It will fill your mouthes in prayer with Phariſaicall thankſgivings for the mercies of Regeneration, Juſtification, Adoption, Sanctification, which you never received. Little doth many a ſoul know what ſanctification, and the ſeverall graces of the Spirit are, that uſe to give God thanks for them: There's many and many a one that muſt for ever be in hell, that were uſed in their prayers to give God thanks for their hopes of glory. And the common cauſe of all this deceit and miſery is, that men do run from under the hands of their Phyſician before he ever went to the bottom of their ſore, and go away with a half-converſion, and ſo ſpend all the reſt of their lives in a meer deluſion, as verily thinking they are converted,

verted, when they are not. How confidently will such receive the Lords Supper, and thrust themselves into the communion of the Saints, as if they had as good right as any to be there? till the Lord of the Feast shall take them to task, and say, *Friend, how comest thou in hither, not having on a wedding garment?* and then they will *be speechless*, Mat. 22.12. How many false deceiving comforts, and perhaps even seeming raptures and assurance, may these have in themselves; as verily thinking their case is good, when alas, they never yet laid the foundation? Yea, and it is to be observed, that Satan is a friend to the comforts of this kind of men, and therefore will do all that he can to promote them. For he would willingly keep his Garrison in peace, *Luk.* 11. 21. And therefore he may possibly be a comforting spirit to them himself, and imitate the Holy Ghost the Comforter of the Saints: And it may be give them such raptures as seem higher then those which the Spirit of holiness doth give. He envieth the Saints their peace and comfort, because he foresees how durable they will prove: But he can be content that

deluded hypocrites may have joy, because *their* comforts do not weaken but ſtrengthen his Kingdom within them, and he knows they are like to endure but for a while.

And thus you may perceive, how hard it is to convert one of theſe half-converted men, that have ſtrangled the New Creature as it were in the birth, and that are fortified againſt all the means of grace, by a falſe conceit that they are ſanctified already. See therefore that you make ſure work, and take not up in the middle, and with halves, but take your preſent time, and give up your ſouls to a totall change.

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4. Conſider; If you *take up ſhort of a through* Converſion, *you loſe all your labour, and ſufferings, and hopes, as to the matter of your ſalvation.*

And what pitty is it that ſo much ſhould be loſt? Alas, to ſee many of our hearers toucht at a Sermon, and come to a Miniſter and bewail their ſinne, and ſeem to be humbled, and promiſe to be new men, and yet all this to be loſt; How ſad a caſe is this to think of?

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To see them leave their company and former course of life, and come among the professors of holiness, and all men take them for reall Converts; and yet all this to be lost, and their souls lost after all: How sad a case is this? If you grow up to the greatest parts for outward duty, and be able to discourse, or pray, or preach, even to the admiration of the hearers; yet if you do not ground this on a through Conversion, all is but lost, as to your own salvation. If you keep up the highest strain of profession, and get the highest esteem in the Church, so that others depend upon you as Oracles; yea, if the Pope with all his infallibility should cannonize you for Saints; it were all but loss. If you should keep up the most confident perswasions of your salvation, and hope to go to Heaven to the last hour of your lives; it were all but lost if you build not all on a through Conversion. Yea, if you should be taken by persecutors for one of the party to which you joyn, and should suffer for the cause of Religion among them; all were but lost, without a sound Conversion, 1 *Cor.* 13, 1, 2, 3.

It is a pittifull caſe to ſee ſome poor unſanctified ſouls, how they wander and change from one opinion to another, and from party to party, to find out that which they want within. They turn to this party firſt, and that party next, and then to another, and then think they are *ſure* in the way to Heaven: when they never throughly turned to God by Jeſus Chriſt; and therefore are certainly out of the way, whatever party it be that they joyn with. Some go to the giddy Sects that make the higheſt pretences to ſtrictneſs: And ſome go to *Rome*, becauſe they think that there they ſhall have more company, and hear the deluding ſound of *Unity*, *Vniverſality*, *Antiquity*, *Succeſſion*, *Miracles* and ſuch like: And then they think they have hit the way. Alas poor ſouls! If God were but neareſt and deareſt to your hearts, and Chriſt and his Righteouſnes exalted within you, and your ſoules unfeignedly turned from your ſinnes, you would be in the certain way to Heaven, in what Countrey or company, or Church ſoever you were; ſuppoſing that you believe and do nothing there, which is inconſiſtent with this

this life of Grace. (Though yet every Chriſtian ſhould chooſe that particular Society, if he can, where he may not only be ſaved, but moſt certainly ſaved, and find the greateſt helpes and leaſt hinderances, or elſe where he may do God the greateſt ſervice.) But chooſe what company you will in all the world, the ſtricteſt, the moſt reformed, the moſt ſplendid in outward pompe and glory, or of whatever excellency elſe you can imagine, you will never be ſaved in it your ſelves, as long as your hearts are unconverted. I know the Papiſts have found out many devices, by Sacraments, and Ceremonies, and the Merits of the Saints, to patch up the defect of a through Converſion; but all are meer deluſions that pretend to ſuch a thing.

O then think of this poor ſinner: Haſt thou gone ſo farre, and done ſo much, and ſhall all be loſt, becauſe thou wilt not follow it to the end? Haſt thou groaned, and wept, and confeſſed and bemoaned thine own condition? Haſt thou prayed, and read, and heard, and faſted, and changed thy company, and much of thy courſe of life? and ſhall all this be loſt, for

for want of going to the bottom, and making a through work of it? What a loſs will this be?

5. Conſider alſo, *What an admirable help and advantage it will be to you through the whole courſe of your lives, if the work of Converſion be once throughly wrought.* I will ſhew you this in ſome Particulars.

Firſt, It will be an excellent help to your *underſtandings*, againſt the groſſer Errors of the world, and will ſtabliſh you in the truth much more then meer Arguments can do: For you will be able to ſpeak for the truth from feelling and experience: He that hath the Law written both in his Bible and in his heart, is likely to hold it faſter then he that hath it in his Bible alone. But of this I have ſpoken already in my Treatiſe againſt Infidelity, Part 2.

Secondly, If you be but throughly Converted, you will have that within you which will be a a continuall help againſt temptations: You have not only experience of the miſchief of ſinning, and the folly of thoſe Reaſons that are brought

brought for its defence; but you have alſo a *new nature*, which is againſt the temptation, as life is againſt poiſon; and as it is a great diſadvantage to the Law of Chriſt, that it ſpeaks againſt the *nature* of the ungodly; ſo is it a diſadvantage to the temptations of the Devil, that they would draw a Chriſtian againſt his *new nature*. You have that *within* you that will plead more effectually againſt ſenſuality, unchariſableneſs, pride, or worldlineſs, or any the like ſinne, then reaſon or learning alone can do. (As in the forecited Book I have further manifeſted.)

Thirdly, If Converſion be throughly wrought, you will have within you a continuall helper of your graces, and a Remembrancer to put you in mind of duty, and a ſpurre to put you on to the performance, and a furtherer of your ſouls in the performance it ſelf: It is out of this ſpark and principle within you that the Holy Ghoſt doth raiſe the acts of grace. This is it that the Word, and Prayer, and Conference, and Sacraments, and all the Means of Grace muſt work upon. If we ſee you do amiſs, we have hopes that you will hear us: If we plainly

plainly reprove you, we may look you ſhould take it in good part: For you have that within you that ſaith as we ſay, and is at deadly enmity with the ſinne which we reprove. If we provoke you to Love and to good Works, we dare almoſt promiſe our ſelves that you will obey: For you have that within you that diſpoſeth you to the duty, and preacheth our Sermons to you over again. O what an advantage it is to our teaching, when you are *all taught of God within*, as well as by his Meſſengers *without*! But when we ſpeak to the *unconverted*, we have little to work upon: We give Phyſick to the dead: We ſpeak all againſt the bent of their ſouls; and every reproof, and exhortation to holineſs, goes againſt their very *natures:* And therefore what wonder if we have the ſmaller hopes to prevail.

Fourthly, If the work be throughly done at firſt, it will help to *reſolve many doubts* that may be afterwards caſt into your minds. You need not be ſtill at a loſs, and looking behind you, and queſtioning your foundation, but may go cheerfully and boldly on. O what an excellent encouragement is this! to know that you have

have hitherto made good your ground, and left all safe and sure behind you, and have nothing to do, but to look before you, and press on towards the mark, till you lay hold upon the prize: Whereas, if you be in any great doubt of your Conversion, it will be stopping you and discouraging you in all your work: you will be still looking behind you, and saying, *What if I should yet be unconverted?* When you should chearfully address your selves to Prayer or Sacraments, how sadly will you go, as being utterly uncertain whether you have a saving right to them, or whether God will accept a Sacrifice at your hand? When you should grow and go forward, you will have little heart to it, because you know not whether you are yet in the way; and this will damp your life and comfort in every duty, when you must say [*I know not whether yet I be throughly Converted.*] O therefore stop not the work at first.

Fifthly and lastly, If the work be throughly done at first, you will persevere, when others fall away. You will have rooting in your selves, entertaining the seed as into depth of earth; and you will

will have the Holy Ghoſt within you, and (more then ſo) engaged for your preſervation, and the perfecting of your ſalvation. When they that received the Word as ſeed upon a rock, and never give it deep entertainment, will wither and fall away in the time of triall; and from them that have not ſaving grace, ſhall be taken away even that which they ſeemed to have, *Mat.* 13.12. & 25.19.

6. And Laſtly Conſider, *If you fall ſhort of a true Converſion at the firſt, the Devil will take occaſion by it, to tempt you at laſt to utter deſpair.* When you have made many eſſaies and trials, and been about the work again and again, he will perſwade you that there is no poſſibility of accompliſhing it. If we convince an open prophane perſon that is unconverted, he may eaſier ſee that yet there is hopes of it: But if a man have been *half-converted*, and lived long in a formall ſelf-deceiving profeſſion of Religion, and been taken by himſelf and others for a godly man, as it is very hard to convince this man that he is unconverted, ſo when he is convinced of it, he will eaſily

eaſily fall into deſperation. For Satan will tell him [*If thou be yet unconverted after ſo many Confeſſions, and Prayers, and after ſo long a courſe of Religion, what hope canſt thou have that yet it ſhould be done. Thou wilt never have better opportunities then thou haſt had? If ſuch Sermons as thou haſt heard could not do it, what hope is there of it? If ſuch Books, and ſuch Company, and ſuch Mercies, and ſuch Afflictions have not done it, what hope canſt thou have? Canſt thou hear any livelyer Teaching then thou haſt heard? or ſpeak any holyer words then thou haſt ſpoken? If yet the work be quite undone, it is not forſaking another ſinne, nor going a ſtep further, that will do it: and therefore never think of it; for there is no hope: Doſt thou not know how oft thou haſt tryed in vain? and, What canſt thou do more?*] And thus you give advantage to the Tempter by your firſt *delayes*, and taking up in meer Preparatories. And therefore I beſeech you, as you love your ſouls, take heed of reſiſting the Spirit of grace, and breaking off the work before it is throughly done, but go the bottom, and follow it on, til

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it be accomplished in sincerity. And now hoping that upon these Considerations you are resolved to do your best, I shall come to the thing which I principally intended; which is, to give you certain Directions, which if you will obey, you may be Converts and Saints indeed.

DIRECTION I. Left the Work of Conversion should miscarry where it seemeth to be begun, or in a hopefull way, I first advise you, to [*Labour after a right Understanding of the True Nature of Christianity, and the Meaning of the Gospel which is sent for to Convert you.*] You are naturally slaves to the Prince of darkness; and live in a state of darkness, and do the works of darkness, and are hasting apace to utter darkness. And it is the light of saving knowledge that must recover you, or there is no recovery. God is the *Father of Light*, and *dwelleth in Light*; Christ is the *Light of the world*; His Ministers are also the *Lights of the world*, as under him; and are sent to *turn men from Darkness to light, by the Gospel which is the light to our feet:*

ſtet: and this is to make us *Children of Light, that we may no more do the works of darkneſes, but may be partakers of the Inheritance of the Saints in Light,* 2 Cor. 4 3,4. 1 Joh 1. 5 1 Joh. 1,5,9 Jam. 1. 17 Mat. 5. 14 Act. 26. 18. Joh. 8. 12. 2 Pet. 1. 19. Eph 5 8,13. Col 1 12. Believe it Darknes is not the way to the Celeſtial Glory. Ignorance is your Diſeaſe and Knowledge muſt be your Cure. I know the ignorant have many excuſes, and are apt to think that the caſe is not ſo bad with them as we make it to be; and that there is no ſuch need of Knowledge, but a man may be ſaved without it. But this is becauſe they want that Knowledge that ſhould ſhew them the miſery of their Ignorance, and the worth of Knowledge. Hath not the Scripture plainly told you, that *If the Goſpel be hid, it is hid to them that are loſt, whoſe mindes the God of this world hath blinded, leſt the Light of the glorious Goſpel of Chriſt, who is the Image of God, ſhould ſhine unto them,* 2 Cor. 3. 4. I know that many that have much knowledge are ungodly. But what of that? Can any man therefore be godly or be ſaved, *without* Know-

ledge. You may have a bad ſervant that yet is skilfull enough in his work; but yet you will not mend the matter, by taking one that hath no skill at all. You may ſend a man on your errand that knows the way and yet will not go it, but loiter and deceive you: But what of that? Will you therefore think to mend the matter, by ſending one that knoweth not a ſtep of the way, nor will not learn it? Though a man of knowledge may be the ſervant of the devil, yet no man *without* knowledge (that hath the uſe of his Reaſon) can be the ſervant of God. A man *may* go to Hell with knowledge: but he *certainly ſhall* go to Hell without it. I do not ſay that you muſt all be men of learning, and skil'd in the Arts, and Sciencies, and Languages: But you muſt have the Knowledge of a *Chriſtian*, though not of a *Scholar*. Can you love or ſerve a God that you *Know* not? Can you let go friends, and goods, and life, for a Glory which you have no Knowledge of? Can you make it the principall buſineſs of your lives to ſeek for a Heaven whoſe Excellencies you know not of? Can you lament your ſinne and miſery, when you are unacquainted with it?

it? Or will you strive against sinne as the greatest evil, when you know not the evil of it? Will you believe in a Christ whom you do not know, and trust your souls and all upon him? Will you rest upon a Promise, or fear a Threatning, or be ruled by a Law, which you do not understand? It is not possible to be Christians without knowing the substance of Christianity: Nor is it possible for you to be saved without knowing the way of salvation.

Labour therefore to be well acquainted with the Grounds and Reasons, and Nature of your Religion. The clearer your Light is, the warmer and livelier your hearts will be. Illumination is the first part of Sanctification. The head is the passage to the heart. O if you did but throughly know what sinne is, and what a life it is to serve the flesh, and what the end of this will prove, with what detestation would you cast it away? If you did throughly know what a life of holiness is, how speedily would you choose it? If you did truly know what God is, how infinitely powerfull, and wise, and good; how holy, and just, and true, and what title he hath to you,

and authority over you, and what an Eternal Portion he would be to you, how is it poſſible that you could preferre the dirt of the world before him, or delay any longer to return unto him? If you did but truly know, what Chriſt is, and what he hath done and ſuffered for you, and what that pardon, and grace, and glory are which he hath purchaſed for you, and offereth to you, and how ſure his Promiſe is by which it is offered; it is not poſſible that you ſhould refuſe to entertain him, or delay to give up your ſouls unto him. Do you think a man that truly knows what Heaven is, and what Hell is, can ſtill be in doubt whether he ſhould turn or not? Alas ſirs, if God would but open your eyes, to to ſee where you are, and what you are doing, you would runne as for your lives; and quickly change your minds and waies. You would no more ſtay in your carnall ſtate, then you would ſtay in a houſe that were falling down on your heads, or in a ſhip that you perceived ſinking under you; or on the ſands when you ſee the tide coming towards you. If you did but ſee your Chamber full of Devils this night; you would

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not stand to ask whether you should be gone: And sure then if you knew how the Devils are about you, how they deceive you, and rule you, and wait to drag you away to Hell, you would never stay a night longer willingly in such a state. While men understand not what the Gospel means, nor what a Minister saith to them, no wonder if they regard them not, but continue in their sinne. If you see a Bear or a mad Dog making towards a man, and tell him of it, and call to him to be gone, if he be a man of another language and do not understand you, he will make never the more hast: but if he understand and believe you, he will away. If people think that Ministers are in jest with them, or that they are uncertain of what they say, no marvell if they hear us in jest, or as men that believe not what they hear: But if you knew that your lives lay on it, yea your everlasting life, would you not regard it and look about you? Now you stand deliberating and questioning the business whether you should turn, and let go sinne, or no: But if you knew that you must certainly have Hell with it if you keep it, methinks your doubt

ſhould quickly be reſolved, and you ſhould be loath to give another nights lodging to ſo chargeable and dangerous a gueſt. Now when we perſwade you to holineſs of life, you will demurre on it, as if there were ſome doubtfullneſs in the matter: But if you knew the nature and end of holineſs, you would ſoon be out of doubt; and if you knew but how much happier you might be with God, you would never ſtick at the parting with your moſt delightfull ſinnes. As the Jews rejected Chriſt, and preferred a murderer before him, and cryed out, *Crucifie him*, and all becauſe they did not *know* him, 1 *Cor.* 2. 8. *Joh.* 8. 9. & 1. 10. *Act.* 13. 27. So you let Chriſt knock, and call, and offer you ſalvation, and you ſtand queſtioning whether you ſhould obey his call, and whether you ſhould not preferre your luſts before him; and all becauſe you *know* him not, nor the Grace and Glory which he tendereth to you. When men underſtand not the Reaſons of God, that ſhould prevail with them, no wonder if they part not with that which is as dear to them as their lives. But when once they know the *Reaſons* of Chriſtianity, thoſe moving, weighty, undeny-

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able Reaſons, that are fetcht from God, and Heaven, and Hell, they'l then ſtand queſtioning the matter no longer; but they will reſign up all even life it ſelf. All this I ſpeak of a ſpiritual, powerfull, and a practical Knowledge; and not of every ſwimming opinion and conceit.

Study therefore what God is, and what he is to you, and what he would be to you. Study what ſinne is, and what the damnation is which it deſerveth. Study what Chriſt is, and hath done and ſuffered for you, and what he is willing to do if you neglect him not. Study what the world is, and what is the utmoſt that ſinne will do for you. Study what the everlaſting Glory is, which you may have with God, if you loſe it not by your folly. And ſtudy what Faith is, and what Repentance is, and what Love, and Joy, and a holy and heavenly life, and how little reaſon you have to be afraid of them. If this *underſtanding* have but deeply poſſeſſed you, it will byas your hearts, and make you reſolved ſetled Converts.

Whereas if you ſeem to turn, and ſcarce know why, and ſeem to take up a

Christian life, before you are throughly possessed with the Nature, Grounds, and Reasons of it, no marvell if you are quickly lost again in the dark, and if every Caviller that you meet with can *non-plus* you, and make you stagger, and call in question all that you have done, and ravell all your work: Or if you do but runne from one party to another, and follow every one that tels you a fair tale, and never know what to fix upon, nor when you are in the way, and when you are out.

The Apprehensions of the mind do move the whole man: *Wisdom* is the *guide* and *stay* of the *Soul*. Sinning is *doing foolishly*, 2 Sam. 24. 10. And sinners *are fools*, Prov. 1. 22. Psal. 75. 4. Their mirth is but *the mirth of fools*, and their song *the song of fools*, Eccl 7. 4. 5. Yea, the best of their services, while they refuse to hear and obey, is but *the Sacrifice of fools*, Eccl. 5. 1. And such are not fit for the House of God: *For God hath no pleasure in fools*, Eccl. 5. 4. He hath need to have his wits about him and know what he doth, that will be the servant of the God of Heaven, and will escape the deceits of a subtile Devil, and get to Heaven

Heaven through so many difficulties, as are before him. *Above all getting* therefore *get Wisdom.*

DIRECT. II. If you would not have the work of your Conversion miscarry, when you *understand* what is offered you, then *Search the Scripture daily to see whether those things be so or not.*

So did the *Bereans*, *Act.* 17. 11. and the Text saith, that *therefore they believed.* We come not to cheat and deceive you; and therefore we desire not that you should take any thing from us, but what we can prove to you from the Word of God, to be certainly true. We desire not to *lead* you *in* the *dark*, but by the *light* to *lead* you *out* of *darkness*: and therefore we refuse not to submit *all* our Doctrine to an equall tryal. Though we would not have you wrong your souls by an unjust distrust of us; yet would we not desire you to take these great and weighty things, meerly upon our words: For then your Faith will be in man; and then no marvell if it be weak, and uneffectual, and quickly shaken: If you

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truſt a man to day, you may diſtruſt him to morrow; and if one man be of greateſt credit with you this year, perhaps another of a contrary mind may be of more credit with you the next year. And therefore we deſire no further to be believed by you, then is neceſſary to lead you up to God, and to help you to underſtand that Word which you muſt believe: Our deſire therefore is that you ſearch the Scripture, and try whether the things that we tell you be the truth. The Word will never work on you to purpoſe, till you ſee and hear God in it, and perceive that it's he and not man only that ſpeaks to you. When you hear none ſpeaking to you but the Miniſter, no marvell if you dare deſpiſe him: for he is a frail and ſilly man like your ſelves: When you think that the Doctrine which we preach to you, is meerly of our own deviſing, and the conjecture of our own brain, no marvell if you ſet light by it, and will not let go all that you have, at the perſwaſion of a Preacher. But when you have ſearcht the Scripture, and find that it is the Word of the God of Heaven, dare you deſpiſe it then? When you there find that we

we ſaid no more then we were commanded, and God that hath ſpoken this Word will ſtand to it; then ſure it will go nearer you, and you will conſider of it, and make light of it no more. If we offered you bad wares, we ſhould deſire a dark ſhop; and if our gold were light or bad, we would not call for the Ballance and the Touchſtone. But when we are ſure the things that we ſpeak are *true*, we deſire nothing more then tryal. Beauty and comlineſs have no advantage of loathſome deformity, when they are both together in the dark: but the light will ſhew the difference, Error may be a loſer by the light, and therefore ſhunnes it, *Joh.* 3. 19, 20, 21. But truth is a gainer by it, and therefore ſeeks it. Let Papiſts hide the Scripture from the people, and forbid the reading of them in a tongue which they underſtand, and teach them to ſpeak to God they know not what; we dare not do ſo, nor do we deſire it: Our Doctrine will not go off well in the dark; and therefore we call you, to the Law and to the Teſtimony, and deſire you to take our words into the light, and ſee whether they be according to the Word

Word of the Lord. Nothing troubleth us more then that we cannot perſwade our hearers to this tryal. Some of them are ſo hardened in their ſinne and miſery, that they will not be at ſo much labour as to open their Bibles, and try whether we ſay true or not. Some of them will not trouble their minds with the thoughts of it; *Pſal.* 10 4. *God is not in all their thoughts.* And ſome are already too wiſe to learn; they will not ſo long abate their confidence of their former opinions; though, poor ſoules, their ignorance doth threaten their damnation. And ſome are ſo engaged in a ſinfull party, that their companions will not give them leave, to make ſo much queſtion of the way that they are in: And ſome will ſcarce take the Scripture for the Rule by which they muſt try and be tryed; but look more to cuſtom, and the will of thoſe in power over them. And moſt are unwilling to try, becauſe they are unwilling to know the truth, and cannot endure to find themſelves miſerable, nor ſee the ſinne which they would not leave, nor ſee the duty which they love not to practice. And thus we cannot

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get them to try whether the things that we teach them be so.

For want of this it is that men deceive themselves, and think their case to be safe when it is miserable, because they will not try it by the Word. This makes them rage and be confident in their folly, *Prov.* 14. 16. and laugh, and sing, at the brink of Hell, and swimme as merrily down the stream to the devouring gulf, as if no evil were near them. This makes them in the depth of misery to have no pitty on themselves, and to do so little to escape it: Though they have time, and means and helps at hand, yet there are not hearts in them to make use of them; yea, they runne themselves daily further on the score: and all because we cannot get them to search the Scripture, and try whether sinne be so small a matter, and whether this will not be bitternes in the end. Hence it is that they are so easily drawn by a temptation; and that they dislike a holy life, and have base thoughts of them that are most diligent for salvation, and are most precious in the eyes of God, and that they can even deride the way that they should walk in, *Prov.* 1, 22. *Psal.* 1. 2.

because

becauſe they will not ſearch the Scripture to ſee what it ſaith to theſe matters. The Word is a Light, and would do much to open their eyes, and winne them over to God, if they would but come to it with a deſire to know the truth. You think that the ungodly that are rich and great, are in a better condition then a godly man that is poor and deſpiſed. And why is this? but becauſe you will not go into the Sanctuary, and ſee in what a ſlippery place they ſtand, and what will be the end of theſe men, *Pſal.* 73.16, 17, 22. In a word, this is the undoing of millions of ſouls. They are all their life time out of the way to Heaven, and yet will not be perſwaded to ask the way; but they runne on and wink, and put it to the venture. Many a thouſand are gone out of the world, before they ever ſpent the quantity of one day in trying by the Scripture whether their ſtate were good, and their way were right. Nay, let their Teachers tell them that they muſt be ſanctified and take another courſe, they will differ from their Teachers, though they be never ſo wiſe or Learned; and they will contradict them, and not believe or regard them.

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And yet we cannot get them to come to us, and put the caſe to the tryal, and let the Scripture be the judge. Would they but do this, they could never ſure have ſuch hard thoughts of their Teachers, and be offended at their plaineſt cloſeſt dealing. You would then ſay [I ſee now the Miniſter ſaies not this of himſelf; he ſpeaks but that which God commandeth him: And if he would not deliver the Meſſage of the Lord, he were unworthy and unfit to be his Embaſſadour: He were cruel to me if he would not pull me out of the fire, by the plaineſt cloſeſt meanes, *Jud.*23. He hated me, if he would not rebuke me, but ſuffer ſinne upon me, *Lev.* 19. 17. If he would pleaſe men, he ſhould not be the ſervant of Chriſt, *Gal.* 1. 10. I know it is no pleaſure to him to trouble me, or to provoke me: but it would be his own deſtruction if he tell me not of my danger, *Ezek.*3.18. And I have no reaſon to wiſh him to damn his own ſoul, and ſuffer me to do the like by mine, and all for fear of diſpleaſing me in my ſinne.] Theſe would be your thoughts if you would but try our words by the Scripture, and ſee whether

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we ſpeak not the mind of God.

And ſure it would go ſomewhat deeper in your hearts, and it would ſtick by you, and be more before your eyes, when you once underſtood that it is the Word of God.

This then is my requeſt to you, ſirs, that the work of your Converſion may not miſcarry, that you would carry all that you hear to the Scripture, and ſearch there, and ſee whether it be ſo or not: that ſo you may be put out of doubt, and may be at a certainty, and not ſtand wavering; and that your Faith may be reſolved into the Authority of God; and ſo the work may be Divine, and conſequently powerfull and prevailing, when the Ground and Motive is Divine. If you be not ſatisfied in the Doctrine which the Miniſter delivereth to you, firſt ſearch the Scripture your ſelves, and if that will not do, go to him, and deſire him, to ſhew you his grounds for it in the Word of God, and joyn with you in Prayer for a right underſtanding of it. Do you queſtion whether there be ſo ſevere a judgment, and a Heaven and a Hell, as Miniſters tell you: Search the Scripture, in *Mat.*25. & 2 *Theſ.*1. 8,9,10.

8, 9, 10. *Joh.* 5. 29 *Matth.* 13. Do you queſtion whether a man may not be ſaved, without converſion, regeneration, and holyneſs? Open your Bibles, and ſee what God ſaith, *John* 3. 3, 6. *Mal.* 18. 3. 2 *Cor.* 5. 17. *Rom.* 8. 9. *Heb.* 12. 14. Do you think a man may be ſaved without Knowledge. Let Scripture judge, 2 *Cor.* 4, 3, 4. *Joh.* 17. 3. *Hoſ.* 4. 6. Do you think a man may be ſaved that doth as the moſt do? and goeth in the common way of the world. Search the Scripture and ſee, *Mat.* 7. 13. and 20. 16. and 22. 14. *Luke* 12. 32. Do you think an unhumbled Soul may be ſaved? that never was contrite, and broken hearted for ſin? Try by *Iſa.* 57. 15. and 66. 2. *Pſal.* 51. 17. *Luke* 4. 18. *Mat.* 11. 28. Do you think a man can be the Servant of God, that liveth a fleſhly life, & *will* keep his ſin? Try by *Rom.* 8. 13. *Joh.* 3. 19. *Epheſ.* 5. 5, 6. 1 *Joh.* 3. 9, 10. Do you doubt whether it be neceſſary to make ſo much adoe to be ſaved, and to be ſo ſtrict, and make Religion our cheifeſt buſineſs? Try by *Pſal.* 1. 1, 2, 3. 1 *Pet.* 4. 18. *Heb.* 12. 14. *Luke* 10. 42. *Luke* 13. 24. *Epheſ.* 5. 15, 16. Do you think a man can be ſaved that is a worldling? whoſe heart is more

on Earth then heaven. Try by 1 *Joh.* 2. 15. *Phil.* 3. 19. *Col.* 3. 1. *Luke.* 14. 26, 33. Do you doubt whether you ſhould ſerve God with your families? and inſtruct them, and pray with them. Try by *Joſ.* 24. 15. *Deut.* 6. 6, 7. *Dan.* 6. 10. 11. *Exod.* 20. 10.

Thus if you will in all theſe weighty matters, but goe to the Scriptures, and ſee whether it ſay as your Teachers ſay, you might ſoone be reſolved, and that by the ſureſt authority in the world. If you think that your *Miniſters* may be deceived, I hope you will confeſs that *God* cannot be deceived, If you think that your Miniſters are paſſionate, or ſelf-conceited, or ſpeak out of ill will to you, I hope you dare not ſay ſo by the Lord: he owes you no ill will, nor ſpeaks a word but what is moſt ſure. If you think us partiall, ſure God is impartiall, what better judge can you have now, then he that is infallible, and muſt judge you all at the laſt? If any Papiſt put it into your head to ask [who ſhall be judge of the ſence of Scripture] I anſwer, who ſhall be judge of the judge of all the world? The Law is made to judge you, and not to be judged by you. None can be the proper judges

judges of the ſence of a Law, but the maker of it: Though others muſt judge their caſes by the Law. Your work is to diſcern it, and underſtand and obey it, and your work is to help you to underſtand it, but it's neither our work nor yours to be the proper, or abſolute judges of it. At leaſt where it ſpeaks plaine, it needs no judge.

Come then to the word in meekneſs and humility, with a teachable frame of Spirit, and a willingneſs to know the truth, and a reſolution to ſtand to it, and yield to what ſhall be revealed to you, and beg of God to ſhew you his will, and lead you into the truth, and you will find that he will be found of them that ſeeke him.

DIRECT. III. If you would not have the work of your Converſion miſcarry, my next advice is this;

See that you be much in the ſerious Conſideration, of the Truths which you underſtand, betwixt God and you in ſecret.

I have often ſpoken of this heretofore; But becauſe I apprehend it to be a point of exceeding great concernment, I ſhall

be longer on it againe, then on the reſt.

The greateſt matters in the world will not work much upon him that will not think of them. *Conſideration* opens the eare that was ſtopt, and the heart that was ſhut up: It ſets the powers of the Soul awork, and wakeneth it from the ſleep of incogitancy and ſecurity. The *Thoughts* are the firſt actings of the Soul, that ſet awork the reſt. Thinking on the matters that muſt make us wiſe, & do the work of God on the heart, is that which lieth on us to do in order to our Converſion. By *Conſideration* a ſinner makes *uſe* of the Truth, which before lay by, and therefore could do nothing. By *Conſideration* he taketh *in* the Medicine to his Soul; which before ſtood by, and could not work. By *Conſideration* a man makes uſe of his Reaſon, which before was laid aſleep, and therefore could not do it's work. When the Maſter's from home the Schollars will be at play. When the Coach-man is aſleep, the Horſes may miſs the way, and poſſibly break his neck and their owne. If the plowman go his way, the Oxen will ſtand ſtill, or make but bad unhandſome work. So when Reaſon is laid aſleep, and out of the way, what may

may not the Appetite do? and what may not the Paſſions do? and what may not Temptations do with the Soul? A wiſe man when he is aſleep, hath as little uſe of his wiſdome as a foole. A Learned man when he is aſleep, can hardly diſpute with an unlearnd man that is awake. A ſtrong man that's never ſo skillfull at his weapons, is ſcarce able in his ſleep to deale with the weakeſt child that is awake. Why all the powers of your Soul are, as it were *aſleep*, till *Conſideration* awake them, and ſet them on work. And what the better are you for being men and having Reaſon, if you have not the *Uſe* of your Reaſon, when you need it? As men are *Inconſiderate* becauſe they are *wicked*, ſo they are the more *wicked* becauſe they are *inconſiderate*. The keeneſt ſword, the greateſt Cannon will do no execution againſt an enemie, while they lie by and are not uſed. There is a mighty power in the Word of God, and the example of Chriſt, to pull down ſtrong holds, and conquer the ſtrongeſt luſts and corruptions. But they will not do this while they are forgotten and neglected. Will Heaven intice the man that thinks not of it? Will Hell deterre the man that thinks not of

it? Why is it that all the reasoning in the world, will do no more good on a man that is deaf, then if you said nothing? But because the passage to his Thoughts and understanding is stopt up. And if you have eyes and see not, and eares and heare not, and willfully cast it out of your thoughts, what good can any thing do to you that is spoken. It is not holding your meat in your mouth that will nourish you if you will not let it down: nor taking it into your stomack, if you will not keep it but presently cast it up again: But it must be kept till it be disgested and distributed. So it is not the most excellent Truths in the world that will change your hearts, if you let them not down to your hearts, and keep them not there by Meditation till they are digested and turned into spirituall life. The plaister must be laid upon the sore if you would be cured. The wound and sickness is at your *Heart:* and if you will not take *in* the word to your *heart*, where the sickness is, I know not how you should expect a cure. The Soul will not be *charmed* into Holiness, by the bare hearing or saying over a few good words; as wizzards use to cure diseases, or seeme to cure them.

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It must be Truth at the *Heart* that must change the Heart. And if you will not *Think* on it, and think on it againe, how can you expect it should come at your Hearts.

You say you would gladly have Christ and grace, and are ready to lay the blame on God, because he doth not give it you, and say, We cannot convert our selves. But would you have the Spirit come in, while you hold the dore against him? He knocks and desireth you to open and let him in, and you wish him to come in, but you bolt the dore, and no intreaty will procure you to open it. It is Consideration of the saving doctrine of the Gospell, that openeth the heart and giveth it entertainment. Set you selves therefore on purpose to this work, & open the doores of your heart which are now shut, and let the King of Glory come in. Who will believe that you love the Light, when you shut the windows, and draw the curtains? If you will set your selves to consider of the Truth, the windows of your Soul will be set open, and then the light will certainly come in. Now you read over whole Chapters, and hear Sermon after Sermon, and either they never stir

you, or at leaſt, it's but a little for a fit, like a man that hath a little warmd him at the fire in the winter, and when he goes from it is colder then before: But if you would but ſet your ſelves to conſider of what you hear or read, one line of a Chapter, or one ſentence of a Sermon would ſay you in tears, or make you groane, or at leaſt do more then now is done. Satan hath garriſond the heart of every carnall man: And conſideration is the principall means to caſt him out. If by conſidering of the terrible threatnings of the word, you would diſcharge theſe Canons of God againſt them, what a battery would it make in the corruptions of your Souls. Our God is a conſuming fire, and the fire of hell is threatned in his Law, as the wages of ſin: By ſerious Conſideration you may as it were, fetch fire from God and from his word, and ſet to the very gates of Satans garriſon, and fire him out of many of his holds.

But becauſe this is ſo needfull a point, I ſhall be ſo large upon it as 1°. to tell you ſome of thoſe things that you ſhould conſider of, 2°. to tell you in what manner you ſhould do it, and 3°. to give you ſome Motives to put you on.

I. The

I. The first thing that I would have you oft to think on, is, *The Nature of that God with whom you have to do.* Consider that if he be the most wise, it is all the reason in the world that he should rule you. If he be Good, and infinitely Good, there is all the reason in the world that you should Love him: and there is no shew of reason, that you should love the world or sin before him. If he be faithfull and true, his threatnings must be feared, and his promises must not be distrusted; and there is no reason that you should make any question of his Word. If he be Holy, then Holiness must needs be most excellent, and those that are the Holiest must needs be the best; because they are most like to God: And then he must be an enemy to sin, and to all that are unholy, because they are contrary to his nature. Consider that he is Almighty, and there is no resisting him, or standing out against him: In the twink of an eye can he snatch thy guilty Soul from thy body, and cast it where sin is better known. A word of his Mouth can set all the world against thee; and set thine own conscience against thee too: A frown of his face can turn thee into Hell. And if he be

be thine enemy, it is no matter who is thy friend: For all the world cannot ſave thee, if he do but condemne thee. They are bleſſed whom he bleſſeth, and they are curſed indeed whom he curſeth. He was from Eternity, and thou art but as it were, of yeſterday: Thy being is from him: thy life is alwaies in his hands, Thou canſt not live an hour without him: thou canſt not fetch a breath without him: nor think a thought, nor ſpeak a word, nor ſtir a foot or hand without him: Thou mayſt better live without bread, or drink, or fire, or aire, or earth, or water, then without him. All the world is before him but as the drop of a bucket, or a little ſand of duſt that ſhould be laid in ballance with all the earth: Hadſt thou but compaſſed about this lower world, and ſeen all the Nations of it, and its wonderfull furniture, and ſeen the great deeps of of the mighty Ocean, and the abundance of Creatures that be in all? O what thoughts then wouldſt thou have of God! But if thou hadſt been above the Starres, and ſeen the Sun in all its glory, and ſeen the frame and courſe of thoſe higher Orbes, and ſeen the bleſſed glorious Angels, and all the inhabitants of the higher world,

world, O then what thoughts of God wouldst thou entertaine? O but if it were possible that thou hadst seen his Glory, or seen but his back-parts as *Moses* did, or seen him in Christ the now glorified Redeemer, what apprehensions wouldst thou have of him then. Then how wouldst thou abhor the name of sin: and how weary wouldst thou be of the pleasantest life that sensuality could afford thee? Then thou wouldst quickly know, that no Love can be great enough, and no praises can be high enough, and no service can be holy and good enough, for such a God: Then you wouldst soon know, that this is not a God to be neglected, or dallyed with: nor a God to be resisted, nor provoked by the wilfull breaking of his Laws. It is Eternal Life to know this God, *Joh.* 17. 3. and for want of knowing him, it is that sin aboundeth in the world. This maketh Holyness so scarce and leane: Men worship they *care* not *how*, because they worship they *know* not *whom*: O therefore dwell on the Meditations of the Almighty. So far as he doth possess thy mind, there will be no place for sin and vanity. One would think, if I should set you no further task, and

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tell you of no other matter for your Meditation, this one, ſhould be enough: For this one is in a manner all. What will not the due knowledge of God do upon the Soul. That's the beſt Chriſtian, and the moſt happy man that knoweth moſt of him: And that's the moſt vile and miſerable wretch, that is furtheſt from him, and ſtrangeſt to him: It is the Character of the foole of fooles, to have a heart whoſe diſpoſition and practice ſaith, There is no God, *Pſal.* 14. 1. That is, To be ſo affected and employed in their hearts, as if there were no God: and when God is not in all his thoughts, *Pſal.* 10. 4. It was better with man when he had leſs knowledge for himſelf, and fewer thoughts for himſelf, and more of God. And there is no way to reſtore us to ſound underſtanding, and to perfect our knowledge, but to turn our eye upon God again: For in knowing him, we know all, that's worth the knowing. Take hold then of the bleſſed God in thy Meditations, and fill thy thoughts with him, and dwell upon thoſe thoughts. Remember he is alwaies with thee: and where ever thou art, or what ever thou art doing, moſt certainly he ſeeth thee. As ſure

sure as thou art there, the Lord is there. He knowes thy thoughts: he heares thy words, he sees all thy waies. And is such a God as this to be provoked or despised! Were it not better provok and despise all the world? Is his favour to be sleighted.? Were it not better to lose the favour of all the world? Consider of this.

2° Another thing that I would have you oft Think of, is, *what end you were made for, and what busines it is, that you came for into the world.* You may well think that God made you not in vaine: and that he made you for no lower end, then for himself: And that he would never have made you, nor so long preserved you, if he had not cared what you do. He would never have endued you with a Reasonable and immortal Soul, but for some high, and noble, and immortal end. Surely it was that you might be happy in Knowing him, that he made you capable of Knowing him: for he made nothing in vaine. It is usefull to a horse to know his pasture, and provender, and work, and perhaps his master; but he needs not know whether there be a God: And accordingly he is qualified. But it is sure

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mans chief concernment to know that there is a God, and what he is, and how to ſerve him, and what he is and will be to us: Or elſe we ſhould never have been capable of ſuch things. And he would never have made you capable of loving him, but that you ſhould be exerciſed and made happy in that Love. The frame and faculties, and capacity of your Souls; and the ſcope of Scripture, do all declare, that you were ſent into this world, to ſeek after God, and to Love him, and obey him, and rejoice in him in your meaſure; and to prepare for a life of nearer Communion, where you may Enjoy him and pleaſe him in the higheſt perfection. Conſider with your ſelves, whether a life of ſin be that which you were made for? Or whether God ſent you hither to break his Laws, and follow your own luſts. And whether the ſatiſfying of your fleſh, and the gathering of a little worldly wealth, and the feathering of a neſt which you muſt ſo quickly leave, be like to be the buſineſs that you were ſent about into the world.

3°. The next thing that I would have you conſider of is, *How you have anſwered the Ends of your Creation, and how you have*

have done the buſineſs that you came into the world to do. Look back upon the drift of your hearts and lives: read over the moſt ancient records of your conſciences: and ſee, what you have been, & what you have been doing in the world till now. Have you ſpent you daies in ſeeking after God? and your eſtates and ſtrength in faithfull ſerving him. Have you lived all this time in the admirations of his excellencies, and the fervent Love of him, and delightfull remembrance of him. and the zealous worſhip of him? If you had done this, you had not need of a Converſion. But conſider; have you not forgotten what buſineſs you had in the world, and little minded the world that you ſhould have prepared for, and lived as if you knew not him that made you, or why he made you? was ſport and merryment the end that you were created for? was eaſe and idleneſs, or eating, or drinking, or vaine diſcourſes, or recreation, the buſineſs that you came into the world about? was living to the fleſh, and ſcraping up riches, or gapeing after the eſteeme of men, the work that God ſent you hither to do. Was this it that he preſerved you for, and daily

daily gave you in provision for? what was it to forget him and sleight him, and turne him out of your hearts, and rob him of his service and honour; and to set up your flesh in his stead, and give that to it that was due to him? Bethink you what you have done, and whether you have done the work that you were sent to do, or not?

4° The next thing you should use to Consider of is, *How grievously you have sinned, and what a case it is that your sin hath brought you into.* If you take but an impartiall view of your lives, you may see how far you have mist your marks, & how far you have been from what you should have been; and how little you have done of that which was your business: And O what abundance of aggravations have your sins, which I shall pass over now, because I must mention them under another head. It is not only some actuall out-breakings against the bent of your heart and life; but your very heart was false, and gone from God, and set in you to do evill.

O the time that you have lost; the means and helps that you have neglected; the motions that you have resisted; the swarms

ſwarms of evil thoughts that have filled your imaginations; the ſtreams of vaine and evill words that have flowed from your mouth! the works of darkneſs, in publik and in ſecret that God hath ſeen you in! And all this while, how empty were you of inward holineſs, and how barren of good works, to God or men. What have you done with all your talents? and how little or nothing hath God had of all?

And now conſider what a caſe you are in, while you remain unconverted? you have made your ſelves the ſlaves of ſinne, the ſlaves of Satan, and the fleſh; and are skilfull in nothing but doing evill: If you be called to prayer or holy meditation, your *hearts* are againſt it, and you are not uſed to it, and therefore you know not how to do it, to any purpoſe: But to think the thoughts of luſt or coveteouſneſs, or hatred, or malice, or revenge; this you can do without any toile: To ſpeak of the world, or of your ſports and pleaſures, or againſt thoſe that you bare ill will to, this you can do without any ſtudy. You are ſuch as are ſpoken of, *Jer.*4. 22. *My people is fooliſh: they have not known me: they are ſottiſh chil-*

dren, and they have no understanding: they are wise to do evill, but to do good they have no knowledge.] You are grown strangers to the God that made you, in whose love and service you should live and find your chief delights. Your hearts are hardned, and you are dead in your sins: The guilt of the sins of your lives are still upon you: You can neither look into your hearts or lives, no not on one day of your lives, or the best hour that you have spent, but you must see the ugly face of sin, which deserveth condemnation. You have made God your Enemy that should have been your only felicity: And yet you are alwaies at his mercy and in his hands. Little do you know how long his patience will yet endure you; or what hour he will call away your Souls; And if death come, alas, what a case will it find you in! how lamentably unready are you to meet him! how unready to appear before the dreadfull God whom you have offended; and what a terrible appearance do you think that will be to you? most certainly if you die before you are converted, you will not be from among the Devils and damned souls an hour. The Law hath cursed you already:

and

and the execution will be anſwerable, if you die in your ſins. And thus you may ſee the gain of ſin, and what it is that you have been doing all this while, for your own Souls; and what a caſe it is that you have brought you ſelvs into; and what need you have ſpeedily to look about you.

5. The next ſtep of your *Conſideration* ſhould be this. *Bethink your ſelves what a bleſſed Condition you might be in, if by Converſion you were but recovered from this miſery, and brought home to God.* This moved the heart of the Prodigall ſon to return, *Luke* 15. 16, 17. [*When he came to himſelf he ſaid, How many hired ſervants of my fathers have bread enough, and to ſpare, and I periſh with hunger.*] He that had not husks to feed on with the ſwine, conſidered the plenty that he had forſaken at home. The pooreſt member of the houſhold of Chriſt, is in a better condition then the greateſt King on earth, that is unconverted. You might have lived another kinde of life, then you have done, for ſafety, and benefit, and true content, if you would have turned your minds and life to God. Were you but Converted, you would be

the living members of Christ, and his precious benefits would be yours: His blood would cleanse you from all your sins; and they would be all freely forgiven you: God would be Reconciled to to you, and become your friend, yea your Father and your God; and will take you for his houshold servants, and adopted children: The Holy Ghost would dwell in you, and guide your understandings, and shew you that which flesh and blood connot reveal, and bring you into acquaintance with the mysteries of God: He will be a Spirit of Light and Life within you, and work your hearts yet more to God, and give you yet stronger inclinations and affections to the things above. He will help you when you are weak, and quicken you when you are dull, and be your remembrancer when you are forgetfull of necessary things. He will help you in prayer, both for matter and for manner, and help you in Meditation, and conference and other duties: He will warn you of your danger, and strengthen you against temptations, and cause you to overcome; and if you fall, he will cause you to rise again: he will be an in-dwelling comforter

to

to you, and so effectually speak peace to you in the midst of your disquietness, that by speaking it, he will create it in you: And in the multitude of your thoughts within you, his comforts will delight your Souls. O what a life might you live, if Christ by his Spirit did once live in you! you may easily conjecture how tender Christ would be of his own members, how dearly he would love them, how constantly he would watch over them, how plentifully he would provide for them, and how safely he would preserve them. And if you should come into a rougher way, he would lead you out: Afflictions should never be laid on you but for your good; and continue no longer then your need continueth them; and be taken off at last to your satisfaction and contentment. Indeed your life would be a life of mercies: and that which is but a common Mercy to common men, would be a speciall Mercy to you, as coming from your Fathers love, and furthering you salvation, and hinting out to you, your everlasting Mercies. You could not open your eyes, but you would see that which may encourage and comfort you: all the works of God which

you behold, would shew you his Majesty, his love and power, and lead you to himself. You could not open your Bible, but you would find in it the blessed lines of Love: O what good it would do you, to read there the blessed Attributes of your God! to look upon his Name; to peruse the description of his most perfect nature! what good would it do you to read of the nature, and incarnation, and life, and death, and resurrection, and assension, and intercession, and return of your blessed Redeemer? what good would it do you to find those holy Rules which your new nature is agreeable to, and to read over the Law, that is written in your hearts, and read the curse from which you are delivered? what life and joy would your Souls receive from the many, and full, and free promises of grace! were you once but truly sanctified and made new, your condition would be often comfortable, but alwaies safe: and when you were in the greatest fears and perplexities, you would still be fast in the armes of Christ: And what a life would that be, to have daily access to God in prayer: to have leave in all your wants and dangers, to

seek

ſeek to him with a promiſe of hearing and ſucceſs; that you may be ſure of much more from him, then a child can from the tendereſt father, or a wife from the moſt loving husband upon earth. What a life would it be, when you may alwaies think on God as your felicity, and fetch your higheſt delights from him, from whom the ungodly have their greateſt terrours? And it is no contemptible part of your benefits, that you may live among his people, and in their ſpeciall love, and have a ſpeciall Communion with them, and intereſt in their prayers, & may poſſeſs among them the priviledges of the Saints, and the Ordinances of God: That in ſtead of idle talk, and the unprofitable fellowſhip of the children and works of darkneſs, you may joyne with the Church of God in his Praiſes, and feed with them at his table on the body and blood of Chriſt, and then have conveyances of renewed grace, and a renewed pardon ſealed to your Souls: But how long ſhould I ſtay, if I ſhould tell you but one half the bleſſings of a Sanctified and ſpirituall ſtate? In a word, God would be yours, Chriſt would be yours, the Holy Ghoſt would be yours, all

things would be yours; the whole world would have some relation to your welfare: Devils would be subdued to you, and cast out of your Soules; sinne would be both pardoned and overcome; Angels would be ministring spirits unto you for your good: The promises of Scripture would be yours; and everlasting Glory would at last be yours; and while you staid on earth, you might comfort your selves as oft as you would, with the believing foresight of that unconceiveable, unspeakable, endless felicity.

O sirs, what a treasure have I here expressed in a few words! what hearts would you have, if they were but possessed & lively & sensible of all that is contained in this leafe or two! you would not envy the greatest Prince on earth his glory, nor change states with any man that were a stranger to these things. Did you but use to consider of the state of the Saints, how could you keep off, and stay with sinne, and make so many delaies in turning unto God! Sure this consideration might turne the scales.

6°. The next part of your Meditation should be, *Of the gracious and wonderfull work of our Redemption, and the means and*

and remedies which are provided for your Souls, and the terms on which Salvation may be obtained.

For all the sins that you have committed, you are not given over to despaire: the Lord hath not left you without a remedie. Your Conversion and Salvation is not a thing impossible. Nay so much is done by Christ already, that it is brought upon reasonable terms even to your hands. A new and living way is consecrated for us by Christ through the veile of his flesh, and by his blood we may have boldness to enter into the Holiest, *Heb.* 10. 19, 20. He hath borne your burden; and offereth you in stead of it his burden which is light, *Matth.* 11. 28. He hath removed the impossibility, and nailed to his Cross the hand writing that was against you, *Col* 2. 14, 15. And in stead of it offereth you his easie yoak. He hath spoiled the Principalities and Powers that had captivated you, and openly triumphed over them on the Cross. You are not left under the care of making satisfaction to God for your own sinnes, but only of accepting the Redeemer that hath satisfied. This much I dare confidently say to you all, without extending

his

his benefits too farre. It will be for want of faith in you, and not for want of satisfaction by the Redeemer, if any of you perish. And how free are his offers? How full are his promises? you are conditionally all pardoned and justified already, as is legible under the hand of God. And the *Condition* which is imposed on you, is not *some meritorious or mercenary work*, but *the Accepting of the benefit freely given, according to its nature, use and ends.* This is the Faith by which you must be justified. These are the terms on which you may be saved. And which is more, the Lord hath provided means, even excellent, and plentifull, and powerfull means, for the furthering of your Souls in the performance of this Condition, and helping you to Believe, and Repent that you may live: And if the Spirit make not these Means effectuall, & adjoyn not his speciall grace, & after this you remaine unconverted, it will not be long of him, but of your selvs. So that you may perceive how hopefull a case you are yet in, by the blood of your Redeemer, if you destroy not your own hopes, and make not your case desperate by wilfull Impenitency, and refusall of free grace.

How

How faire are you yet for Heaven? and what happy advantages have you for Salvation? It's brought even to your doors; It's thruſt as it were into your hands: The Redeemer hath done ſo much for you all, as to bring your Salvation to the choice of you own wills; and if you be his choſen ones, he will alſo make you willing. You have precepts to Believe, you are threatned if you will not Believe, you have promiſe upon promiſe, and Chriſt himſelf offered you pardon, and life, and Salvation with him, if you are but truly and heartily willing. You have God himſelf, condeſcending to beſeech you to accept them: and Embaſſadours intreating you in his name and ſtead: 2 *Cor.* 5. 19, 20. You have Ordinances fitted to your neceſſities: both Reading, and Preaching, and Sacraments, and Prayer. You have ſtore of plaine and powerfull Books: you have the Godly about you, moſt deſirous to aſſiſt you, that would be glad to ſee or heare of your Converſion: You have the ſight of the wicked, that are wallowing in their own dung, and the dirt of the world, to make you hate ſuch beaſtly waies. You have Reaſon and Conſcience

ſcience within you to conſider of theſe matters, and ſet them home, and apply them to your ſelves: You have time and ſtrength to do all this, if you will not abuſe it, and provoak God to take it from you for your negligence. You have Mercies of many ſorts, outward and inward, to win upon you, and encourage you in the work! And ſometime Afflictions to remember you, and awaken you, and ſpur you on; The Devil and all your Enemies are ſo far diſabled, that they cannot deſtroy you againſt your wills, nor keep you from Chriſt, but by your own Conſents. The Angels of Heaven are ready to helpe you, and would even rejoice at your Converſion. This is your caſe, and theſe are your helps, and encouragements: You are not ſhut up under deſperation. God never told you, *It is in vaine to think of Converſion*; *It is too late*; If any have told you ſo, it was the Devil, and not God: And one would think that ſuch Conſiderations as theſe ſhould drive the nayle to the head, and be effectuall to move you to Reſolve, and Turne.

7°. The laſt thing that I would ſet before you to be Conſidered, is, *What's like*

like to be the end of it, if after all this you should die unconverted?

O sirs, your hearts are not able now to conceive of it, nor the tongue of any mortal man to utter it. But so much of it we can certainly utter, as one would think should make your hearts to tremble. You have seen it may be, a dying man, in what pangs and agonies he parteth with his Soul: and you have seen it's like, the corps that was left there behind; and seen it laid in the common Earth. But you see not what becomes of the Soul, nor what an appearance it made in another world, nor what company did attend it, nor what a place or state it past into. O sirs, when the hour is at hand that this must be your own case, it will awaken you to other kind of affections then you have or can have at the reading of these words. It's wonderfull that a little distance should make us so insensible of that change which we are all certaine will come to pass: And yet through the folly and deadness of our hearts, it is so: But they are other kind of thoughts of these weighty matters, which we shall have the next hour after death, then the livelieſt affections beforehand can afford us.

The

The misery was great that the Redeemer did find you in, and which you deserved by your sinne against the Law of the Creator. But if you be found unconverted at last, your punishment will be much sorer, and your case far worse then it was before. The Redeemers Law or Gospel, hath it's peculiar Threatning, which differeth from the Law of the meere Creator in severall respects: Even 1°. in the nature of the punishment, which will be torments of Conscience for the neglect of a Redeemer, and recovering Grace, which you should never have felt if you had never been Redeemed: 2°. And in the Degree of the punishment, which will be far sorer, *Heb.* 10. 29. And 3°. in the Remedilesness of it, the Sentence being irreversible and peremtory: The first Law indeed provided no Remedy, but it did not Exclude Remedy, nor make it impossible: But the Law of Christ doth positively and expresly exclude all Remedy, and leave the Soul that goeth unconverted out of the body, to utter Desperation, and Misery without Help or Hope of End. But I shall not stand now to describe to you the terrors of Judgment or of Hell, because I have done it already in

in other Books, which I deſire you to fetch the reſt of this Meditation from; that is, My Treatiſe of Judgment, and the beginning of my third Part of my Book of *Reſt*.

II. Having tould you what ſhould be the Matter of your Conſideration, I ſhall next tell you (but briefly) in what *Manner* you ſhould performe it. And here I ſhall not ſtand to preſcribe you any long or exact Method for Meditation, both becauſe it agreeth not with my preſent reſolved brevity, and becauſe the Perſons that now I deale with are not capable of obſerving ſuch Rules; and if any deſire ſuch Helps they may tranſferre the Directions which are given on another Subject in my Book of *Reſt*, to the Subject now in hand.

1. Do not ſtay till ſuch thoughts will come of them ſelvs into your minds, but *ſet your ſelves purpoſely to Conſider of theſe matters*. Take ſome time to call your Souls to an account concerning their preſent ſtate, and their preparations for Eternity. If a Heathen *Seneca*, could call himſelf every night to an account for the

the evill committed, and the good omitted in the day past, as he professeth that he ordinarily did, why may not even an Unconverted man, that hath the helps which are now among us, bethink himself of the state of his Soul? But I know that a Carnal heart is exceeding backward to serious Consideration, and is loath to be troubled with such thoughts as these; and the Devil will do what he can to hinder it, by himself, and others: but yet if men would but do what they may do, it might be better with them then it is. Will you but now and then purposely withdraw your selvs from company into some secret place, and there set the Lord before your eyes, and call your Souls to a strict account about the matters that I have mentioned even now, and make it your business to exercise your Reason upon them; and as you *Purposely* go to Church to heare, so *Purposely* set your selvs to this duty of Consideration, as a necessary thing.

2. When you are upon it, labour to waken your Souls, and to be very *Serious* in all your Thoughts; and do not think of the Matters of Salvation, as you would do of an ordinary triviall business, which

which you do not much regard, or care how it goes. But remember that your Life lyeth on it, even your everlasting Life: And therefore call up the most earnest of your thoughts, and rouse up all the powers of your Souls, and suffer them not to draw back, but command them to the work: And then set the seven Points that I mentioned even now before you: And as you think of them, labour to be Affected with them, in some measure according to their exceeding weight. As *Moses* said to *Israel, Deut.* 32. 46. *Set your Hearts to all the words which I testifie among you this day; which ye shall command your children to do*, &c. *For it is not a vaine thing for you; because it is your life.* And as Christ said. *Luke* 9. 44. *Let these sayings sink into your ears.* So I say to you, Let the Matters which you think of, go to your hearts, and sink down to the quick of your affections.

And if your hearts would slip away from the work, and other thoughts would creep into your mind, and you are aweary of these Considerations before they have done their work, see that you give not way to this lazinesse, or un-

willingneſs, but remember it is a work that *Muſt* be done, and therefore hold your Thoughts upon it, till your hearts are ſtirred, and warmed within you.

And if after all, you cannot awake them to *Seriouſneſs* and *Senſibility*, put two or three ſuch wakening Queſtions as theſe to your ſelves.

1. *Queſt.* What if it were but the caſe of my body, or ſtate, or name, ſhould I not earneſtly conſider of it? If one do but wrong me, how eaſily can I think of it, and how tenderly do I feel it; and can ſcarce forget it: If my good name be blemiſhed, and I be but diſgraced, I can think of it night and day: If I loſe but a beaſt, or have any Croſs in the world, or decay in my Eſtate, I can think of it with ſenſibility: If I loſe a child or a friend, I can feel it as well as think on it: If my health be decayed, and my Life in danger, I am in good earneſt in thinking of this. And ſhould I not be as ſerious, in the Matters of Everlaſting Life? Should I not think of it, and ſoberly, and earneſtly think on it, when body and Soul do lie at the ſtake, and when it concerneth my everlaſting Joy or Torment?

2. *Queſt.*

2. *Queſt.* What if I had but heard the Sonne of God himſelf calling on me to Repent, and be Converted, and ſeconding his Commands with thoſe earneſt expreſſion, (*He that hath an eare to hear let him hear*) would it not have brought me to ſom ſerious Thoughts of my ſtate? Why this he hath done in his Word, and doth it by his Embaſſadors, and why then ſhould I not conſider it?

3. *Queſt.* If I did but know that death were at my back, and ready to arreſt me, and that I ſhould be in another world before this day ſevennight, I ſhould then begin to bethink me in good ſadneſs: And why do I not ſo now, when I have no hold of my life an hour, and when I am ſure that ſhortly that time will come?

4. *Queſt.* If my eyes were but open to ſee that which I pretend to believe, and which is certainly true; even to ſee a glimpſe of the Majeſty of the Lord? to ſee the Saints in Joy and Glory, to ſee the damned Souls in Miſery; and if I heard their lamentations; would not this even force my heart to Conſideration? O then how earneſtly ſhould I think of theſe things? And why ſhould I not do

ſo now, when they are as ſure as if I ſaw them, and when I muſt ſee them ere it be long?

Many more ſuch awakening Queſtions are at hand, but I give you but theſe brief touches on the things that are moſt common and obvious, that the moſt ignorant may be able to make ſome uſe of them. With ſuch thoughts as theſe, you muſt bring on your backward hearts, and ſhake them out of their inſenſibility, and awaken them to the work.

III When you have brought your hearts to be ſerious, *be ſure that you drive on your Conſiderations to a Reſolution.* Break not off in the middle, or before you bring the matter to an iſſue; But let all be done in order to Practice. When you have been Thinking of the excellencies of God, and the world to come, and comparing them with all the delights on earth; put the queſtion then to your hearts, and ſay, *What ſaiſt thou now, O my Soul? which of theſe is the better for thee? which is the more deſireable? and which of them ſhouldeſt thou preferre? Reſolve then, and make thy choice according*

ding to the light, and convictions which thou haſt received. When you are thinking of the Reaſons that ſhould move you to be Converted, ask your ſelves? *Whether theſe Reaſons be not cleare, and what you have to ſay againſt them? and whether any thing that can be ſaid to the contrary, can prove it better for you to be as you are, and to remaine unconverted?* Ask your ſelves, *Is my Judgment Reſolved, or is it not? And if it be (as ſure it muſt be, if you be not beſides your ſelves) then write it down under your hands, or at leaſt in your hearts. I do here confeſs before the Lord, that his Commands are juſt, his motions are Reaſonable, his offers are exceeding Mercifull: I am ſatisfied that it's beſt for me to Turn to him ſpeedily, and with all my heart? I confeſs before him that I have no Reaſon to the contrarie that deſerves to be owned, and called Reaſon; This is my own Judgment; of this I am Convinced: If I Turn not after this, the Light that is in me, and the Judgment that I now poſſeſs, muſt needs be a witneſs againſt my Soul.* If you would but thus drive on the caſe to a Reſolution of your Judgments, you would have a great advantage for the reſolving

of your wills, which is the next thing that you must proceed to. And therefore next ask your selves, *Why should I not now* Resolve *and* fixedly Resolve, *to Turn without any more delay? Is not the case plain before me? What Reason have I to stand questioning the matter any longer, and to be unwilling to be happy? shall I provoke God by dallying with him, and hazzard my Soul by lingering out my time, in such a miserable state? No; by the Grace of God I will Return; Even this hour, without any more delay.* Thus drive on all your Consideration to Resolution (But of this, I have more to say anon.)

By this time you may see of what necessity this duty of *Consideration* is, and how it must be performed, that it may further your Conversion: But because it is a matter of so great Necessity, I am loath to leave it thus, till I have done what I can to perswade you to the practice of it. To which end I intreate you to think of these following Motives.

1. *Consideration* is a duty that you may performe if you will. You cannot say

ſay that it is wholly out of your power; So that you are left unexcuſable, if you will not be perſwaded to it. You ſay, you cannot Convert your ſelves: But cannot you ſet your ſelves to *Conſider* of your waies, and bethink you of thoſe Truths that muſt be the Inſtruments of your Converſion? Your Thoughts are partly at the command of your will: You can turn them up and down from one thing to another. Even an unſanctified Miniſter that hath no ſaving reliſh of Spirituall things, can think of them, and ſpend moſt of his time in thinking of them, that he may preach them to others: And why cannot you then turn your thoughts to them for your ſelves? You can think of Houſe, and Land, and Friends, and Trading, and of any thing that ayleth you, or any thing that you want, or any thing that you love, or think would do you good; And why cannot you think, of your ſinne, and danger, of God, and of his Word and Works, of the ſtate of your Souls, and of Everlaſting Life? Are you not able to go ſomtimes by your ſelves, and Conſider of theſe matters? Are you not able when you are alone in your beds, or

as you travail in the way, or at your labour, to bethink you how things ſtand with your Soules? Why are you not able? what is it that could hinder you, if you were but willing.

2. Yea further *Conſideration* is ſo cheape a Remedy, that if you will not uſe this, you deſpiſe your Souls: yea and you deſpiſe the Lord himſelf, and the Everlaſting things which you are called to Conſider of. A man that is in danger of loſing his eſtate, or health, or life, and will not ſo much as *bethink* him of a Remedy, doth ſure ſet light by them, and loſe them by his contempt. A man that had but his houſe on fire, and would not ſo much as *Think* how to quench it, doth deſerve that it ſhould be burnt. If your Parents, or Children, or Friends were in diſtreſs, if you would not ſo much as *Think* of them, it were a ſigne you did not ſet much by them. Why Sirs, are not your Souls worth the *Thinking* on? Is not God, is not your Redeemer worth the *Thinking* on? And yet you will hypocritically pretend that you love God above all, when you will not ſo much as ſeriouſly *Think* of him? How can you ſhew greater contempt of

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any thing, then to caſt it out of your minds, as unworthy to be thought on? And how can you more plainly ſhew that you deſpiſe God, and Heaven, then by ſuch a courſe as this? If it be not worth the *Thinking* on, it's worth nothing.

3. Conſider that God doth not ſet ſo light by your Salvation. He thought it worth a great deale more: Muſt Chriſt think it worth his bloody ſufferings and worth ſuch a life of labour and ſorrow, and will not you judg it worth your *ſerious* Conſideration? If he had not *Thought* on it, and *Thought* againe, how miſerable ſhoud we have remained? Miniſters alſo muſt *Think* on it, and *Study* how to ſave your Souls. And ſhould you not *Study* how to ſave your own? Muſt another man make it the buſineſs of his life, to *Think* how to do you good, that you may be ſaved? and are you not as much bound to do good to your ſelves? Yea, all that fear God about you are bound to *Study* to do you good? and ſhould you not *bethink* you then, of the things that concern your own good?

4. Moreover, what have you your Reaſon for, but to *Conſider*. And where-

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in do you differ from the beasts, so much as in your Reason? If you have Reason, and will not use it, you bruitifie your selves? You live like mad men: for what is Madness, but a loss of the use of Reason? And do you think it a small thing, to deface so noble a Creature as man, and to turne your selves into beasts, and mad-men? Do you think that God will not call you to account for your Reason, how you have used it? Doubtless he gave it you for a higher employment, then to enable you to plow, and sow, and follow your trades, and provide for your flesh. If this were all that a man did exceed a beast in, what a silly wretched wight were man? Yea so much more miserable then beasts, as his knowledg begets more care, and sorrow, and fear, then theirs. What matter is it for *having* Reason at all, if it be not that we may use it for the matters of God, and Eternall life?

5. Moreover, your Soul is an Active Principle, which will be working one way or other: Your *Thoughts* will be going on one thing or other; And therefore the bare Consideration is no great labour to you. And if you *must* lay out your

your thoughts on ſome thing, is it not better lay them out on *theſe* things, then on any other? Have you any Better matters to think on then theſe? Have you any Greater matters? or matters of greater Neceſſity to think of; You cannot ſure imagine it; At leaſt you will not ſay ſo for ſhame. This makes your *inconſiderateneſs* an unexcuſable ſinne. If *Thinking* were a toile to you, it were another matter. But when you muſt Think of *ſomething*, why not of God, and your Eternall ſtate, and the way to Heaven, as well as of other matters. Will you rather throw away your *Thoughts* then God ſhall have them? If a man command his ſervant that is lame, to go on his buſineſs, the refuſer hath a good excuſe: *I cannot go, or not without great pain, and danger*: But if he have a ſonne or a ſervant, that is ſo wanton that he cannot ſtand on his legs, but ſpends his time in running up and down and dancing, and leaping, this perſon hath no excuſe, if he will refuſe to go on his Maſters or his Fathers Errand; but will gadd about on his pleaſure all day, and will not go a few ſteps when he is bidden; eſpecially if it were for his own

own life, or welfare. So when you have *Thoughts* that *will not* be kept idle, but will be gadding abroad through the world, and yet you will not think of God, and the matters of your peace, what wilfullneſs is this. If you ſhould ask one that hath it not, for meat, or drink, or money, they might well deny you. But if you ask theſe of one that hath abundance, and knows not what to do with them, but would throw them down the channell, rather then you ſhould have them, what would you think of ſuch a one? Eſpecially, if it were your ſervant, or your child that owed you much more? Thus do you by God, and your own Souls. You have *Thoughts* enough and to ſpare, you know not what to do with them; and yet rather then you will ſpend one hour in a day or a week in ſerious *Thoughts* of the ſtate of your Souls, and the life to come, you will caſt them away upon news, and tales, and other folks buſineſs that *do* not concerne you; yea, you will caſt them downe the ſink of Covetouſneſs, and Malice, and Luſt, and Wantonneſs, and make them ſervants to the Devil and the fleſh. If you have a brooke running by your Land, you will

will endeavor to turn it over your ground, that seeing it *must* run, it may as well run that way where it may do good, as run in vaine. So when your thoughts *must* run, is it not better that you turne them to your own hearts, and states, to prepare for the world that you are ready to step into, then to let them run in vaine. If you see a man go into a wine-seller, (though it be his own) and pull out all the spigots, and let all the wine run about the seller, and suffer no body to catch it, or be the better for it, what would you conceive of the wisdom or charity of that man? Your *Thoughts* are a thing more precious then wine, and such a thing as should not be spilt. And yet is not this your everie-daies practice? You are before him that knows your Thoughts: Denie it if you can. What hours of the day, can a man come to you, and find your *Thoughts* altogether idle? What minute of an hour can a man come and ask you, *What are you now Thinking on?* and you can truly say, *Nothing!* I know as long as you are awake you are alway thinking of somewhat, (and perhaps when you are asleep) And what is it on?

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This body shall have a Thought: and *that* body a *Thought*: every word you hear, and every wrong that's done you, and almost every thing you look upon, shall have a *Thought*: and God & your own Salvation shall have none: that is; you will lose them, and let them run in waste; but you will do no good with them, nor take in any profit by them, to your selves.

6. Have you any *Thing* that better deserves your Consideration, then God, and your Salvation? Certainly God hath more right to your *Thoughts* then any thing else that you can place them on. Your flesh, your Friends, your worldly business are neither so honourable, so necessarie, or so profitable Subjects, as God, and Heaven are. As there is more profit to be got by the tillage of fruitful Land, then barren Heath; or by digging in a Mine of Gold, then in a Clay-pit. So is there more pleasure and profit to be gotten, in one hours serious *Thoughts* of your Salvation, then in *thinking* all your life time of the world.

7. At least methinks you should Consider, how disproportionably and unequally

qually you lay out your *Thoughts*. Cannot you ſpare God the Tenths; no nor the hundreth-part of them? Look back upon your lives, and trace your *Thoughts* from day to day, and tell me how many hours in a weeke, in a month, in a year, you have ſpent, in ſerious *Thoughts* of the ſtate of your Souls, and of the life to come? Is it one hour of a hundred, of a thouſand, of ten thouſand, with ſome of you, that is thus ſpent? Nay I have very great cauſe to fear, that there are ſome, yea that there are many, yea that ther's far the greateſt number, that never ſpent one hour ſince they were born, in withdrawing themſelves purpoſely from all other buſineſs, and ſoberly, and in good ſadneſs bethinking themſelves what caſe they are in, what Evidence they have of their Title to Salvation, or how they muſt be juſtified at the Barre of God; no nor what buſineſs they have in the world, and to what end they were made, and how they have done the work, that they were made for. Ah Sirs, doth Conſcience juſtifie you in this? Or rather will it not torment you one day to remember it? What? did thy Land, and Livings, worldly matters deſerve *all* thy

thy *Thoughts*, and did not the saving of the Soul deserve some of them? Did thy lusts, and sports, and wantonesse deserve all; and did not God deserve some of them? Was it not worth now and then an hours time, no nor one hours study in all thy life, to bethink thee in good sadnesse how to make sure of a life of endless Joy and Glory, and how to scape the flames of Hell? This is not an equall distribution of thy *Thoughts*, As thou wilt confesse at last in the horror of thy Soul.

8. It is the end of your present Time and warnings, that you may Consider, and prepare for your Everlasting state. What have you to do on Earth but to Consider how to get well to Heaven? O that you did but know what a Mercy it is, before you enter upon an Endless Life, to have but Time to bethink you of it, and to make your Election sure! If you were to be called away suddenly this night, and the Angel of the Lord should say to any of you, *Prepare; for within this hour thou must die, and appear before the living God.* Then would you not cry-out, *O not so suddenly Lord! Let me have a little more time to Consider of my Condition:*

Condition: *Let me have one month longer, to bethink me of the case of my Soul, and to make sure that I am justified from the guilt of my sins*: *Let me have one day more at least to prepare for my Everlasting state: for alas, I am yet unready.* Would not these be your cries, if God should call you presently away? And yet now you have time you will not *Consider* of these matters and prepare.

9. Moreover, is it not time for *you* to *Consider* your wayes, when *God* doth *Consider* them: If *he* would forget them or did not regard them, *you* might regard them the less your selves: But be sure of it, he doth observe them whether you do or not, and he Remembreth them though you forget them. Dost thou not know that all the sins of thy life are still on record before the Lord; saith *Job* 14. 16, 17. *Thou numbrest my steps: dost thou not watch over my sinne? My transgression is sealed up in a bag, and thou sowest up mine iniquity.* Do you think that God forgets your sins, as you forget them? saith the Lord by the Prophet *Hosea*, 7. 2. *They Consider not in their hearts, that I remember all their wickedness; Now their doings have beset them*

about, they are before my face: But, you'l say, what if God do Consider our waies? why surely then it is not for nothing, but evil is near if not prevented. As the Lord saith in *Deut.* 32, 34, 35. *Is not this laid up in store with me, and sealed up among my Treasures? To me belongeth vengeance, and recompence: their foot shall slide in due time: For the day of their calamity is at hand, and the things that shall come upon them make haste.* If God be registring up thy sins, thou hast cause to tremble to think what that pretends: For in this *hardness and impenitency of thy heart, thou art treasuring up wrath, against the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous Judgments of God,* Rom. 2. 5. As Grace is the seed of Glory, so sinne is the seed of shame, and trouble, and everlasting Torment: and though it may seeme long before the Harvest, you will tast the bitter fruit at last; and whatsoever you have sowed, that shall you reap.

10. Moreover; if any thing ail'd you, you look that God should presently *Consider* you: Or if you want any thing, you think he should *Consider* your wants: And yet will you not *Consider*

sider of him, and of your own wants? When you are in trouble you'l cry to God, *Have Mercy upon me O Lord, Consider my Trouble*, Psal. 9. 33. *Consider and heare me O God*, Psal. 13. 3. When you lie in pain and sickness, you'l then cry to God; *Consider mine affliction, and deliver me*, Psal. 119. 153. If you be oppressed or abused, you'l groan as the *Israelites* under their Task-masters, and perhaps cry to God, as the captived people, *Lam.* 1. 11. *See O Lord, and Consider; for I am become vile: Remember O Lord, what is come upon us; Consider and behold our reproach*: ch. 5. 1. & 2. 20. And must God Consider of you, that will not Consider of him, or your own Souls? Or may you not rather expect that dreadfull answer, which he gives to such regardless sinners. *Prov.* 1. 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30. And heare your cries, as you heare his Counsell, and think of you, as you thought of him.

Nay more then so; even while you forget him, the Lord doth daily Consider you, and supply your wants, and save you from dangers; and should you then cast him out of your Thought? If

he did not think on *you*, you would quickly feel it to your cost and sorrow.

11. Moreover the Nature of the Matter is such, as one would think, should force a Reasonable creature to consider of it, and often and earnestly to consider. When all these things concurre in the matter, he must be a block or a mad man, that will not Consider. 1. When they are the most excellent, or the greatest things in all the world: 2. When they are our *own* matters; or neerly concerne us. 3. When they are the most necessary, and profitable, and delightfull things. And 4. When there is much difficulty in getting them, and danger of losing them. And all these go together in the matter of your Salvation.

12. If you will not think of God, and your Souls, of Heaven, and Hell, what then will you think of? All other things in the world are but toyes, and jesting matters to these. Crowns, and Kingdoms, Lands, and Lordships are but chaff, and bawbles, dirt and dung to these Everlasting things. The acts of renowned Kings and Conquerors, are but as Poper-plaies, in Comparison of the

the working out of your Salvation. And yet will you not be drawn to the *Consideration* of such astonishing things as these? One would think that the exceeding Greatness of the matter, should force you to Consider it whether you will or no: when smaller Objects affect not the Senses, yet Greater will even force their way. He that hath so hard a skin that he cannot feel a feather, methinks should feel the weight of a mil-stone: And if he feel not the prick of a pin, methinks he should feel a dagger. He that cannot hear one whisper, methinks should hear a Cannon, or a clap of Thunder, if he have any such thing as hearing left him. He hath bad eyes that cannot see the Sun. One would think that so Glorious an Object as God, should so entice the eyes of men, that they should not look off him. One would think that such matters as Heaven and Hell should follow thy thoughts which way ever thou goest, so that thou shouldest not be able to look besides them, or to think almost of any thing else, unless with great neglect, and disesteem. O what a thing is a stony heart, that can forget not only the God that he liveth by, but also the place

where he must live for ever? Yea that will not be perswaded to the *Saber Consideration* of it for one hour.

2. And as these are the Greatest matters, so they are your *Own* matters, and therefore one would think you should not need so much ado to bring you to Consider them. If it were only *other mens* matters, I should not wonder at it. But *self-love* should make you regard your *Own*. In outward matters, all seek their *Own* things, *Phil.* 2. 21. And have they not more Reason to seek their *Own* Salvation? It is your *Own* Souls, your *Own* danger, your *Own* sin, your *Own* duty, that I perswade you to Consider of. It is that God, that Christ, that would be your *Own*: it is that Heaven, that blessedness that may be your *Own*, if you lose it not by neglect: It is that Hell, and torment, that will certainly be your *Own* if you prevent it not. And shou'd not these be thought on? You will think of your *Own* goods, or lands, or riches; of your *Own* families, your *Own* business, your *Own* lives, and why not also of your *Own* Salvation?

3. Especially, when it is not only your *Own*, but it is the *One thing needfull*, *Luke*

Luke 10. 42. It is that which your life, or death, your Everlasting Joy or Torment lieth on: and therefore *must* be Considered of, or you are utterly undone for ever. Necessity lyeth upon you; and wo be to you, if you Consider not of these things. It is not so necessary that you eat, or drink, or sleep, or live, as it is Necessary that you make sure your Everlasting life. And the Profit also doth answer the necessity. Buy but this one Pearle, and you will be infinite gainers, though you sell all that you have in the world to buy it. *Matth.* 13, 44, 45, 46. Get God, and get all: make sure of Heaven, and then fear no loss, nor want, nor sorrow. If you count not all the world as dung, for the winning of Christ, that you may be found in him, possessed of his righteousness, it is because you know neither the world, nor Christ, *Phil.* 3. 7, 8, 9. Yea the Delight also will answer the Commodity: *For in the presence of God is fulness of Joy, and at his right hand are pleasures for evermore*, Psal 16. 11. And the fore-thoughts of them may well make *glad our hearts, and cause our Glory to rejoyce*, Psal. 16. 8, 9. *For Goodness and*

Mercy ſhall follow us all the daies of our lives, and we ſhall dwell in the Houſe of the Lord for ever: Pſal. 23. 6. *He ſhall guide us with his Counſell, and afterward receive us into Glory*: Pſal. 73. 24. And leſt yet you ſhould ſuſpect any lack of Comfort, he tells you, you ſhall *enter into the Joy of your Lord*, Matth. 25. 23. *And that you ſhall be with him where he is, to behold his Glory*, Joh. 17. 24.

4. And yet if all this might be had with a wet finger, If Heaven were the portion of worldlings, and ſluggards, that trouble not their Thoughts much about it, then you might have ſome excuſe for your Inconſiderateneſs. But it is not ſo: there are difficulties, in your way; and they are many and great: what a dark underſtanding have you to informe, what a dull and backward nature to ſpurre on? What an unreaſonable appetite? What rageing paſſions? What violent rebellious ſenſes to contend with, to Maſter and to rule? Abundance of adverſaries on every hand: A ſubtil Devil, and as malicious as ſubtil: and as furious and able to do you a miſchief, if God reſtrain him not. A world of wicked men about you: each one more ſtiff in Errour,

then you in the Truth; and more fast to the Devil then you are to God, (if his grace do not hold you faster, then you will hold your selves:) and therefore they are abler to deceive you, then you are to undeceive them: Many of them are crafty, and can puzzle such ignorant beginners as you; and can put a face of reverence and truth upon damnable Errors, and pernicious waies: And those that have not wit, have foolish violence, and scorn and passion; and can *drive* you towards Hell, if they cannot draw you. All these Enemies you must Conquer, or you are lost. And is it not time for a man in so much danger to *Consider* of them, that he may know how to escape? And for one that is compassed about with such difficulties, to *Consider* how he may well get through them. What abundance of things have you to *Consider* of? of all your life past; of the Relations you have born; and how you have performed the duties of those relations? Of the time you have had; and how you have spent it? Of the means you have had; and what you have received by them: Of the present state of your Souls, your sins, your miseries, your hopes, and

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the duties that are incumbent on you, in order to your recovery. Of the temptations to be encountred with; and the graces that are daily to be exercised and confirmed: should not a man *bethink* himself with all possible care, and *Consider*, and an hundred times *Consider*, that hath all this to do, or be undone for ever? You have much to Know that will not easily be known, and yet must be known: and much to do, receive, and suffer, that hath difficulty joyned with Necessity: Were it Necessary and not hard, the facility might draw you to make light of it. And were it hard, and not Necessary, the difficulty might more discourage you then the matter would excite you: But when it *Must* be done, or you must be shut out of Heaven, and lie in Hell for it world without end; and yet there are so many difficulties in the way, I think it's time to look about you, and seriously Consider.

12. To conclude; *Consideration* would prevent a world of misery, which else will make you Consider when it is too late. It must be a principall means of your Salvation if ever you be saved. If God have so much Mercy for you, he will

will *make* you *Conſider*; and ſet your ſins in order before you, *Pſal.* 50. 21. And ſet Hell fire before your face, and hold your Thoughts on it, that you cannot look off. He will ſet before you a Crucified Chriſt, and tell you, that this your ſins have done, and make you think of the Reaſon of his ſufferings, & what there is in ſinne that could require it; and what it is to rebell againſt the Lord, and runne your ſelves into the Conſuming fire. Now your Thoughts are gadding abroad the world, and ſtragling after every trifle, and going away from God: But if ever God will ſave you, he will overtake your hearts, and fetch them home, and ſhew them that they have ſomewhat elſe to think on. If Commands will not ſerve, he will ſend out his threatnings, and terrours ſhall come upon you, and purſue your Soul as the wind, *Job* 30. 15. He'l fetch you out of the Ale-houſe, and the Gaming-houſe, and take you off the merry pin; and lay that upon your heart, that you ſhall not eaſily ſhake off. If you are taken up with the Cares of the world, he'l ſhew you that you have ſomewhat elſe to care for, and drown thoſe Cares in greater Cares. If

you

you have such giddy, unsetled, vagrant minds, that you cannot call in your Thoughts to God, nor hold them with him; he will lay those clogs and bolts upon them at first, that shall restraine them from their idle vagaries: and then he will set upon them such a byas, as shall better order them, and fix them for the time to come. Men do not use to go to Heaven, and never *think* of it. And to scape Hell fire, and the plague of sinne, and the curse of the Law, and the Wrath of God, and the rage of Satan, and never *think* on it: Nor do they use to mind other matters, and find themselves in Heaven, before they ever dreamd of it, or before their hearts were set upon it. No Sirs, if ever God will save you, he will make you Consider, and again Consider, and perhaps with many a sigh and groan; and bring these things so neere your hearts, that you shall not only Think on them, but feel them: According to that Command, *Deut.* 6. 6, 7. & 11. 18, 19, 20. They shall be as written before your eies: You shall *think* of them when you lie down, and when your rise up, as if they were written upon the testure of your beds:

you

you shall *think* of them when you sit at home, when you go abroad, as carrying them still with you, which way soever you go. As before God was not in all your Thoughts, so now he will be the sum and end of them all.

And if by your Resistance you scape these Considerations, believe it, God will bring you to *Consideration*, by a severer and more dreadfull way. If he do but give your Conscience a Commission, it will follow you, and bring you to such a Consideration, as *Judas* was brought to. If he lay you under his Judgments, and speak to you by his Rod, and give you a lash with every word, and ask you whether *yet* you will *Consider* of it? It may bring such things to your Thoughts, as you were little troubled with before. If he say but the word, how soon will your Soul be required of you; and when you lie in Hell and feel the smart you will then *Consider* of it. Now we cannot beg of you to bestow one hour in sober Consideration, but then you shall do it without intreaty. Then you will be as a man that hath the Stone, or Gout, or Toothake, that cannot forget it, if he would never so faine. Forget your folly, your obstina-

obstinacy, and unthankfulness, then if you can, Forget Gods wrath, and the torment which you feel, then if you can. Now you were so busie that you could not have while to think of the matters of the world to come; but then God will give you leasure; you shall have little else to do; You shall have time enough: When you have thought of these things ten thousand years, you shall still have time enough before you, to think of them againe. You will not Consider now, but, when *God hath performed the intents of his heart*, in the latter daies *you shall perfectly Consider it*, Jer. 23. 20. & 30. 24. O that you were wise, that you understood this, that you would *Consider* your latter end, *Deut.* 32. 29.

What brings so many thousand Souls to Hell, but because they would not *Consider* in time? If you could speak with any of those hopeless Souls, and ask them, How came you to this place of torment? they would tell you, *because we did not Consider of our case in time: We little thought of this day, though we were told of it: We had a load of sinne upon us, and did not Consider how we might be relieved: We had Christ, and Mercy set before*

before us, but we did not Consider the worth of them, nor how to be made partakers of them: We had time, but we Considered not how to make the best of it. We had the work of our Salvation lay upon our hands; but we did not Consider how we might accomplish it: O had we but Considered what now we feel, we might have escaped all this, and have liv'd with God! These would be the answers of those miserable Souls, if you could but ask them the cause of their misery. Ther's scarce a Thief or Murderer hang'd at the Gallows, but will cry out, *O if I had but had the wit, and grace to have Considered this in time, I need not to have come to this.* Ther's scarce an unthrift that falls into beggery; no nor a man, that comes to any mischance, but will say, *If I had Considered it before hand, I might have prevented it.* Most of the Calamities of the world might have been prevented, by timely and sober *Consideration.* God himself doth place mens wickedness much in their Inconsiderateness, and lays the cause of their destruction upon it. Whence is it that *Israel* was rebellious to astonishment, *Isa.* 1. 3. *why, Israel doth not know, my people doth not Consider.*

Job.

Job 34. 25, 26, 27. *He shall break in pieces mighty men without number, and set others in their stead: therefore he knoweth their works, and he overturneth them in the night, so that they are destroyed. He striketh them as wicked men in the open sight of others: because they turned back from him, and would not Consider any of his waies.* Why do men live so wilfully in sinne, but because *They Consider not that they do evill*, Eccl. 5. 1. How many such hath the world that God pronounceth a Wo to? *Isa* 5. 11, 12. that drink, and play, and give themselves to their merriments, *but they regard not the work of the Lord; neither Consider the Operation of his hands. They Consider not in their heart, the folly of their waies*, Isa. 44. 18, 19, 20. When they see Gods Judgments, they *Consider* not the meaning of them, and therefore lay them not to heart, *Isa.* 57. 1. 2.

And when God calleth men to Conversion, or Reformation, he useth to call them to *Consideration* as the way to it. *Hag.* 1. 5. *Thus saith the Lord of Hosts, Consider your waies.* The Sonne that shall escape the misery of his Fathers, is he that *Considereth, and turneth away*

from

from his transgressions, and Considereth and doth not his Forefathers works; Ezek. 18. 14, 20. And when he sendeth the Prophet to them, *Ezek.* 12. 3. It is but with this encouragement, *Though they are a rebellious house, it may be they will Consider.* And *David* professeth, that *Consideration* was the beginning of his Conversion, *Psal.* 119. 59. *I thought on my waies, and turned my feet unto thy Testimonies. I made hast and delayed not to keep thy Statutes.*

I know that it is the Lord, that must renew and revive a sinfull Soul: But yet under God, *Consideration* must do much. O could we but persuade our people to *Consider*, it is not sure possible that they could be as they are, or do as they do. Would so many thousands live in ease, and quietness under the guilt of so many sinnes, and the wrath of God, if they did but well *Consider* of it? Durst they live so peaceably in a state of death, and in the slavery of the Devill, if they did but well *Consider* of it? Would they do no more to prepare for their speedy appearing before God, and for the escaping of Hell fire, if they did but *Consider* of it? Would they swallow down their

cups

cups so greedily, and give up themselves to the world so eagerly, if they did but well *Consider* what they do? Methinks they should not. The cause of sinne, and the Devil is so naught, that I should hope to shame it with most of the ungodly, if I could but bring them to a serious *Consideration* of it. O how the Kingdom of Satan would down, if we could but tell how to make men *Considerate*: How fast the Devil would lose his servants? What abundance Christ would gaine? And how many would be saved, if we could but tell how to make men *Considerate*? And one would think that this should be easily done, seeing man is a self-loving, and reasonable creature: But yet to our grief, and great admiration, we cannot bring them to it. I should not doubt, but one Sermon, or one Sentence of a Sermon, might do more good then a hundred do now, if I were but able to perswade the hearers, when they come home, to follow it by serious *Consideration*. But we cannot bring them to it: If our lives lay on it, we could not bring them to it: Though we knew that their own lives and Salvation lieth on it, yet can we not bring them

them to it. They think, and talk of other matters, almost as soon as the Sermon's done: and they turn loose their Thoughts; or if they do read, or hear, or repeat a little; yet cannot we get them to one half hours secret, and sober *Consideration* of their case. This is the Reason, why it is so rare a thing to see men throughly turn to God. This is much of the use of all Gods teachings, and afflictions too, but to bring men to sober *Consideration*. God knows that sinne hath unmanned us, and lost us the use of our Reason, where we have most use for it: and therefore the means, and Works of God, are to recover us to our *Reason*, and to make us *men* againe. The very graces of his Spirit, are to make us to be more Reasonable.

And now before I dismis this Direction, I have a Question, and a Request, to make to thee, whoever thou art, that Readest these lines. My *Question* is this; *Hast thou ever soberly Considered of thy Wayes, and laid these greatest matters to heart, or hast thou not?* Dost thou ever use to retire into thy self, and spend any time in this needfull work? If thou dost not, my *Request* to thee is, that

now at last thou wouldest do it without delay. Shall I beg this of thee, shall the Lord that made thee, that bought thee, that preserveth thee, Request this of thee; that thou wouldest sometimes betake thy self into some secret place, and set thy self purposely to this work of *Consideration*, and follow it earnestly, and close with thy heart, till thou hast made something of it, and brought it to a Resolution. Wilt thou then spend a little time, in reasoning the case with thy self, and calling thy heart to a strict account, and ask thy self, *What is it that I was made for? And what business was I sent into the world about? And how have I dispatcht it? How have I spent my time, my thoughts, my words; and how shall I answer for them? Am I ready to die, if it were this hour? Am I sure of my Salvation? Is my Soul Converted, and truly Sanctified by the Holy Ghost? If not, what Reason have I to delay? Why do I not set about it, and speedily resolve? Shall I linger till death come, and find me unconverted? O then what a sad appearance shall I make, before the Lord.* And thus follow on the discourse with your hearts? What say you, Sirs? Will you here

here promise me to bestow but some few hours, if it be but on the Lords Day, or when you are private on the way, or in your beds, or in your shops, in these *Considerations?* I beseech you, as ever you will do any thing at my Request, deny me not this Request. It is nothing that is unreasonable. If I desired one of you to spend an hour in talking with me, you would grant it; yea, or if it were to ride, or go for me? And will you not be intreated to spend now and then a little time in *Thinking* of the matters of your own Salvation? Deny not this much to your selves, deny it not to God, if you will deny it me. Should you not bethink you a few hours, of the place, and state that you must live in for ever? Men will build strong where they think to live long; But a tent, or a hut will serve a Souldiour for a few nights. O, Sirs, Everlasting is a long day. In the Name of God let not Conscience have such a charge as this against you hereafter; *Thou art come to thy long home, to thy Endless state, before even thou spentest the space of an hour, in deep and solid, and serious Considerations of it, in trying thy title to it.* O what a Confound-

ding charge would this? I am confident I have the witness of your Consciences going along with me, and telling you it is but reasonable, yea, and needfull which I say. If yet you will not do it, and I cannot beg one hours sober discourse in secret, between you and your hearts, about these things, then what remedie, but even to leave you to your misery. But I shall tell you in the Conclusion, that I have no hope of that Soul, that will not be perswaded to this duty of *Consideration*: But if I could perswade you to this reasonable, this cheap, this necessary work, and to follow it close, I should have exceeding great hopes of the Salvation of you all. I have told you the truth: *Consider what I say, and the Lord give you understanding*; 2 Tim. 2, 7. Or if you put me to conclude in harsher terms, they shall be still the Oracles of God; *Now Consider this yee that forget God, lest I teare you in pieces, and there be none to deliver you*, Psal. 50. 22.

And so much for the third Direction, about *Consideration*; on which I have staid somewhat long, because I apprehend it of exceeding necessity.

DIRECT.

DIRECT. IV. The fourth Direction which I shall give you, that the work of your Conversion may not miscary is this: *See that the Work of Humiliation be throughly done, and break not away from the Spirit of Contrition before he have done with you: and yet see that you mistake not the Nature, and the Ends of the work, and that you drive it not on further then God requireth you.*

Here I shall first shew you the true Nature of Humiliation: and 2°. the use and ends of it, and 3°. the mistakes about it, that you must avoid, and 4°. I shall press on the Substance of the Direction, and shew you the necessity of it.

I. There is a Preparatory Humiliation that goes before a saving change, which yet is not to be despised, because it is a drawing somewhat neerer unto God, though it be not a faithfull closure with him. This Preparatory Humiliation, which many have that perish, doth chiefly consist in these things following. 1°. It lieth most in the *Fear* of being damned: As it is most in the Passions, so most in this of *Feare*. 2°. It consisteth also in some *apprehension* of the greatness of our sinnes, and the wrath of God, that

hangs over our heads, and the danger that we are in of being damned for ever. 3°. It consisteth also in some *apprehensions* of the folly, that we are guilty of in sinning, and of some *Repentings* that ever we did it, and some remorse of Conscience for it. 4°. Hereto may be joyned some Passions of *Sorrow*, and this expressed by *groans* and *tears*. 5°. And all this may be accompanyed with *Confessions* of sinne to God and man, and Lamentations for our misery, and in some it preceedeth to desperation it self. 6°. And lastly it may proceed to an indignation against our selves, and to the taking of a severe revenge on our selves, yea, more then God would have men take; as *Judas* did by self-destroying. This desparation, and self-execution are no parts of the Preparatory Humiliation; but the excess, and error of it, and the entrance upon Hell.

2. But there is also a Humiliation that is proper to the Converted, and which accompanieth Salvation; and this containeth in it, all that is in the former, and much more: Even as the Rational Soul containeth the sensitive, and vegetative, and much more. And this Saving

Humiliation consisteth in these following particulars.

1. It beginneth in the Understanding; 2°. It is rooted in the Will; 3°. It worketh in the Affections; and 4°. When there is opportunity it sheweth itself in outward expressions, and actions.

1. Humiliation in the Understanding, consisteth in a low esteem of our selves, and in a self-abasing, self-condemning Judgment on our selves. And that in these Particulars.

1°. It consisteth in a deep, and solid apprehension, of the odiousness of our own sinnes habitual, and actual; and of our selves for our sinnes: and that because they are contrary to the blessed Nature and Law of God, and so contrary to our own perfection, and their Good.

2°. It consisteth also in a solid, and fixed apprehension of our own ill-deserving, because of these sinnes: so that our Judgments do subscribe to the equity of the condemning sentence of the Law, and we judge our selves unworthy of the smallest mercy, and worthy of Hell fire.

3°. It consisteth in an apprehension of your undone, and miserable Condition in our selves: not only as we are the

Heirs

Heirs of Torment, but as we are void of the Image and Spirit of God, and have loſt his favour, and are under his diſpleaſure, and enmity by our ſinne, and have forfeited our part in Everlaſting Glory, and how unable we are to help our ſelves.

And 1°. This is in ſuch a meaſure, that we truly judge our ſinne, and our ſelves for ſinne, to be more odious then any thing elſe could have made us, and our miſery by ſinne in the foreſaid particulars, to be greater then any outward Calamity in the fleſh, and then any worldly loſs could have procured us. And this we apprehend by a Practical Judgment, and not only by a bare uneffectual ſpeculation. 2°. And the ſpring of this is ſome Knowledge of God himſelf, whoſe Majeſty is ſo Glorious, and whoſe Wiſdom is ſo Infinite; who is ſo Good in himſelf, and unto us, and whoſe Holy Nature is contrary to ſinne; and who hath an abſolute Propriety in us, and Soveraignty over us. 3°. And alſo it proceedeth from a Knowledge of the true ſtate of mans felicity, which by ſin he hath caſt away, that it conſiſteth in the Pleaſing and Glorifying, and Enjoying of God, in Loving, and Delighting in

in him, and Praising him for ever, and having a Nature Perfectedly Holy, and fitted hereunto. To see that sinne is contrary to this felicity, and hath deprived us of it, is one of the springs of true Humiliation. And 4° It proceedeth also from a believing Knowledg of Christ Crucified, whom our sinnes did put to death, who hath declared in the most lively manner to the world by his Cross, and sufferings, what sinne is, and what it had done, and what a case we had brought our selves into. Thus much of saving Humiliation consisteth in the Understanding.

2°. The Principal seat of this Humiliation is in the Will, and there it consisteth in these following Acts. 1°. As we think basely of our selves, so the *will* hath a fixed *Displacency* against our selves for our sinnes, and a kind of *Loathing of our selves*, for all our abominations: as you may read, *Ezek.* 36. 31. & 20. 43. & 6. 9. A humble sinner is alien our with himself, and as he is Evill, his heart is against himself.

2°. There is also in the will a *deep Repenting* that ever we sinned, and wronged God, and abused Grace, and have brought

brought our selves to this as we have done; so that the humbled Soul could wish that he had spent his daies in prison, in beggery, or in bodily misery, so that he had not spent them in sinne; and if it were to do againe, he would rather choose such a life of shame and calamity in the world, then a life of sinne, and would be glad of the exchange.

30. A humbled Soul is truly *willing, to grieve* for the sinnes which he hath committed, and to be as deeply sensible of them, and afflicted for them, as God would have him. Even when he cannot shed a tear, yet his will is to shed them. When he cannot feel any deep afflicting of his Soul for sinne, his hearty Desire is, that he might feel it. He doth an hundred times weep in Desire, when he doth it not in Act.

40. A humbled Soul is truly willing to Humble the flesh it self, by the use of those appointed means by which God would have him bring it in subjection: As by fasting, or abstinence, or mean attire, hard labour, and denying it unnecessary delights. It's a Doubt worth the Considering, whether any such Humbling act must be used purposely in *Revenge*

venge on our selves for sinne, To which I answer, that we may do nothing in such *Revenge* that God doth not allow, or that makes our body less fit for his service: for that were to be *Revenged* of God, and our Souls: But those Humbling means which are needfull to Tame the body, may well be used with this double intention: First and *Chiefly*, as a Means for our safety, and duty for the time to come; that the flesh may not prevail, and then *Collaterally* we should be the more content that the flesh is put to so much suffering, because it hath been, and still is so great an Enemy to God, and us, and the cause of all our sinne, and misery: And this is the *Revenge* that is warrantable in the Penitent, and some think is meant 2 *Cor.* 7. 11.

30. As the Humbled Soul hath base thoughts of himself, so he is willing that *others* should esteem, and think of him accordingly, even as a vile, unworthy sinner; so far as his disgrace may be no wrong to the Gospel, or to others, or dishonour to God. His Pride is so far taken down, that he can endure to be vilified, with some Consent: not approving of the sinne of any man that doth it mali-

maliciously, but consenting to the Judgment, and Rebukes of those that do it truly, and to the Judgment of God, even by them that do it maliciously. The Humbled Soul doth not stand defending, and unjustly extenuating his sinne, and excusing himself, and swelling against the Reprover: Whatever he may do in a temptation, if this temper were predominant, his Pride, and not Humility, must be predominant. But he judgeth himself, as much as others can justly judg him, and humbly confesseth, to be Base in mens eyes, till God shall think it meet to raise him, and recover his esteem.

And the Root of all this in the will is, 1°. A Love to God, whom we have offended, 2°. A hatred of sinne, that hath offended him, and that hath made us vile, and 3°. A believing sense of the Love, and Sufferings of Christ, that in his flesh hath condemned sinne, (*Rom.* 8. 2, 3.) And thus you see what Humiliation is in the Will, which is the very Life and Soul of true Humiliation.

3°. Humiliation also consisteth in the Affections: In an unfeigned sorrow for the sinne which we have committed, and the corruption that is in us; and a *shame*

for

for these sinnes; and a holy feare of God whom we have offended, and of his Judgments which we have deserved; and a hatred of our sinnes, by which we have deserved them. But (as I must further shew you anon) it is not the Measure, but the sincerity of these Passions, by which you must make a Judgment of your state: And that will be hardly discerned by the Passions themselves, but only by so much of the Will, as is in them: and therefore the Will is the safest to Judg by.

4°. Humiliation also consisteth expressively in the outward actions, when opportunity is offered: And it is not true in the Heart, if it refuse to appeare without, when God requireth it, in your ordinary course. The outward acts of Humiliation are these: 1°. A voluntary Confession of sinne to God, and to men, when God requireth it, and that is, when it is necessary to his Honour, to the healing of them that we have endangered, and satisfying the offended: At least in the hearing of men, in such cases as these to Confess them openly to God. An unhumbled Soul will refuse this for the shame: but the Humble will

freely

freely take shame to themselves, and warne their brethren, and justifie God, and give him the Glory. 1. Joh. 1. 9. *If we confesse our sinnes, he is faithfull and just to forgive us*: Read Mark. 5. 6. Levit. 5. 5. & 16. 21. & 26. 40. Num. 5. 6, 7. Jam. 5. 16. *Confesse your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that yee may be healed.* Prov. 28. 13. *He that hideth his sinnes, shall not prosper: but who so confesseth, and forsaketh them, shall have mercy.* Not that any man is to confess his secret sinnes to others, except in case that he cannot otherwise find relief: Nor that a man is to publish those offences of his owne, by which he may further dishonour God, and hinder the Gospel: But when the sinne is open already, and specially, when the offense of others, the hardening of the wicked, the satisfaction of the Church concerning our Repentance, do require our Confession, and open Lamentation, the Humble Soul both must, and will submit to it: But the rotten hearted, unhumbled Hypocrite will *Confesse*, but in these cases: 1°. When the *secrecy* of the Confession, or the *smalness* of the fault, or the *Customarinesse* of such Confessing,

doth

doth make it to be a matter of no great disgrace: 2°. Or when it is so open, that it is in vain to attempt to hide it, and his Confession will do nothing to *increase* the disgrace. 3°. Or when Conscience is awakened, or they see they must die, or are forced by some terrible Judgment of God; In all these cases the wicked may Confess. And so *Judas* will Confess, *I have sinned in betraying the innocent blood*: And *Pharaoh* will Confess, *I and my people have sinned.* And a Thief on the Gallows will Confess: and the vilest wretches on their death bed will Confess: But we have more death-bed Confessions, then voluntary Confessions before the Church. Nay so far hath Pride and Hypocrisie prevailed, and the ancient discipline of the Church been neglected, that I think in most Countries in England, there are many more that make Confessions on the Gallows, then personally in the Congregation.

2°. Humiliation must be also expressed, by all those external means, and signes which God by Scripture, or Nature calleth us to. As by *tears*, and groans, so far as we can seasonably procure them. And by *Fasting*, and

laying by our worldly pomp and bravery, and using meane, (though decent) attire: and by condescending to men of the lower sort, and stooping to the meanest: By humble Language, and Carriage: and by forgiving others, on this account, that we are sensible of the greatness of our Debts to God. And thus I have briefly shewed you the true Nature of Humiliation, that you may know what it is that I am perswading you to, and which you must submit your hearts unto.

II. When I have told you the Use and Ends of Humiliation, you will see more of the Reason of it's Necessity to your selves. And first, it is one Use of Humiliation, to help on the Mortification of the flesh, or *Carnal self*, and to annihilate it as it is the Idol of the Soul. The nature of mans sinfull, and miserable estate is, that he is fallen from *God*, to *Himself*; and liveth now to *Himself*, studying, and loving, and pleasing *Himself*, his *Natural self*, above God. And a sinner will let go many outward sinnes, and be driven from the out-works, before

fore he will let go *Carnal self*, and be driven from the Castle and strength of sinne. There is no part of Mortification so Necessary, and so Hard as *Self-denial:* Indeed this doth virtually comprehend all the rest, and if this be done, all's done. If it were but his Friend, his Superfluities, his House, his Lands, perhaps a Carnal heart might part with it: But to part with his life, his *All*, his *Self*, this is a hard saying to him, and enough to make him go away sorrowfull, as *Luke* 18. 22, 23, 24. And therefore here appeareth the Necessity of Humiliation: This layeth all the *Load* on *Self*, and breaketh the heart of the old man, and maketh a man loath *himself*, that formerly doted on *himself*. It layeth this Tower of *Babel* in the dust, and maketh us abhorre *our selves* in dust and ashes: It setteth the house on fire about our eares, which we both Trusted and Delighted in. And makes us not only see, but feel, that it's time for us to be gone. Pride is the Master Vice in the unsanctified: and it's the part of Humiliation to cast it down. *Self-seeking* is the businesse of their Lives, till Humiliation help to turn the streame: And then if you did but see their

thoughts, you should see them think most vilely of *themselves*: And if you do but over-heare their Prayers, or Complaints, you shall hear them still cry out upon *themselves*, and beg help against *themselves*, as their greatest Enemies.

2. The next Use of Humiliation (and implyed in this) is, to Mortifie those sinnes, which *Carnal self* doth live upon, and is maintained by; and to stop all the avenues, or passages of it's provision. Sinne is *sweet* and *dear*, to all that are unsanctified: But Humiliation makes it bitter and base. As the *Indians* cured the *Spanish Captaine* of his Thirst after Gold, by pouring melted Gold down his throat; or as Children are perswaded from playing with a Bee-hive, when they are once or twice stung by them; or from playing with snappish dogs, when they are bitten by them. So God will teach his Children to know what it is to play with sinne, when they have smarted by it. They will know a nettle from a harmless herbe, when they feel the sting: we are so apt to live by sense, that God seeth it needfull, that our Faith have something of sense to helpe it. When the Conscience doth accuse, and the heart is smar-

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ting, and groaning in pain, and we feel that no shifting, or striving will deliver us, then we begin to be wiser then before, and to know what sinne is, and what it will do for us. When that which was our delight, is become our burden, and a burden too heavy for us to bear, it cureth our delighting in it. When *David* was watering his couch with his tears, and made them his drink, his sinne was not the same thing to him, as it was in the committing. Humiliation washeth away the painting of this harlot, and sheweth her in her deformity. It unmasketh sinne, which had got the vizard of Virtue, or of a small matter, or harmless thing. It unmasketh Satan, who was transformed into a Friend, or an Angel of light, and sheweth him, as we say, with his cloven feet and horns. How hard is it to cure a worldling of the love of money? But when God hath laid such a load of it on his Conscience, that makes him groan, and cry for help, he hath then enough of it. When he feels those words in *Jam.* 5. 1, 2, 3, 4. And he begins to weep, and howl for the Miseries that are comming on him, and he feels the stink of his corrupted Riches,

and the Canker of his Gold and Silver do begin to eat his flesh as fire, and his Idol is but a witness against him, then he is better able to judge of it, then he was before. The wanton thinks he hath a happy life, when the harlots lips do drop as the honey-combe: But when he perceiveth her end is bitter as wormwood, and sharp as a two-edged sword, and that her feet go down to death, and her steps take hold on Hell, and he lyeth in sorrow complaining of his folly, *Prov* 5. 3, 4, 5, 11, 12. he is then of a more rectified judgment then he was. *Manasseh* humbled in irons, is not the same as he was upon the Throne: Though Grace did more to it then his fetters, yet were they some way serviceable to that end, Humiliation openeth the doore of the heart, and telleth you what sinne is to the quick; and letteth in the words of life, which passed no further then the eare or braine. It is a tireing work to talk to dead men, that have lost their feeling; especially when it is an affective, and practicall doctrine, which we must deliver to them, which is lost if it be not felt and practised. Till Humiliation comes, we speak to dead men, or at least

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to men that are faſt aſleep. How many Sermons have I heard that one would think, ſhould have turned mens hearts within them, and made them cry out againſt their ſinnes, with ſorrow and ſhame in the face of the Congregation, and never meddle with them more: When yet the hearers have ſcarce been moved by them, but gone away as they came, as if they knew not what the Preacher ſaid; becauſe their hearts were all the while aſleep within them. But a Humbled Soul, is an awakened Soul: It will regard what is ſaid to it: eſpecially when they perceive that it cometh from the Lord, and concerneth their Salvation. It is a great encouragment to us, to ſpeak to a man that hath eares, and life, and feeling; that will meet the word with an appetite, and take it with ſome reliſh, and let down the food that is put into their mouths. The will is the chiefeſt fort of ſinne. If we can there get in upon it, we may do ſomething: But if it keep the heart, and we can get no neerer it then the eare or braine, there will no good be done. Now Humiliation openeth us a paſſage to the heart, that we may aſſault ſinne in it's ſtrength. When I tell

you of the abominable nature of ſinne, that cauſed the death of Chriſt, and cauſeth Hell, and tell you that it is better to runne into the fire, then to commit the leaſt ſinne wilfully; though it be ſuch as the world makes nothing of, another man may hear all this, and ſuperficially believe it, and ſay it is true: but it is the humbled Soul that *feeleth* what I ſay. What a ſtir have we with a drunkard, or worldling, or any other ſenſuall ſinner, in perſwading him to caſt away his ſinnes with deteſtation: and all to little purpoſe: ſometime he will, and ſometime he muſt needs be taſting them again; and thus he ſtands dallying, becauſe the word hath not maſtered his heart. But when God comes in upon the Soul as with a tempeſt, and throweth open the doores, and as it were thundereth, and lightneth in the Conſcience, and layeth hold upon the ſinner, and ſhaketh him all in pieces by his terrours, and asketh him, *Is ſinning good for thee? Is a fleſhly careleſs life ſo good? Thou wretched worm. Thou fooliſh piece of clay. Dareſt thou thus abuſe me to my face? Doſt thou not know that I look on? Is this the work that I made thee for, and that I ſerved and pre-*

serve thee, and continue thee alive for? Away with thy sinne, without any more adoe, or I'le have thy Soul away, and deliver thee to the tormentors. This wakeneth him out of his dalliance, and delaies; and makes him see, that God is in good earnest with him, and therefore he must be so with God. If a Physician have a patient that is addicted to his appetite, who hath the Gout, or Stone, or other disease, and he forbid him wine, or strong drink, or such meats as he desireth; as long as he feeles himself at ease, he will be venturing on them, and will not be curbed by the words of the Physitian: But when the fit is on him, and he feels the torment, then he will be ruled: Pain will teach him more effectually then words could do. When he *feeleth* what is hurtfull to him; and *feeleth* that it alway makes him sick, it will restraine him more then *hearing* of it could do. So when Humiliation doth break your hearts, and make you feel that you are sick of sinne, and filleth your Soul with smart, and sorrow, then you will be the more willing that God should destroy it in you. When it lyeth so heavy on you, that you are unable to look up, and

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makes you go to God with groanes and teares, and cry, *O Lord be mercifull to me a finner*: When you are faine to go to Miniſters for eaſe to your Conſciences, and fill their eares with accuſations of your ſelves, and open even your odious ſhameſull ſinnes, then you will be content to let them go. Now there is no talking to you of Mortification, and the reſolute rejecting of your ſinnes: The Precepts of the Goſpel are too ſtrict for you to ſubmit to. But a broken heart would change your mindes. The healthfull Plow-man ſaith, *Give me that which I love: theſe Phyſicians would bring us all to their Rules, that they may get money by us: I never meun to follow their directiuns*. But when ſickneſs is upon him, and he hath tryed all his own skil in vaine, and paine giveth him no reſt, then ſend for the Phyſician: and then he will do any thing, and take any thing whatever he will give him, ſo that he may but be eaſed, and recovered. So when your hearts are whole, and unhumbled, theſe Preachers, and Scriptures are too ſtrict for you: You muſt have that which you love: ſelf-conceited preciſe Miniſters muſt have leave to talk; but you will never

ver believe that God is of their mind, or will damn men for taking that which they have a mind of. O but when theſe ſinnes are as ſwords in your hearts, and you begin to feele what Miniſters told you of, then you will be of another mind: Away then with this ſinne: There's nothing ſo odious, ſo hurtfull, ſo intollerable. O that you could be rid of it, what ever it coſt you! Then he will be your beſt Friend, that can tell you how to kill it, and be free from it; and he that would draw you to it, would be as Satan himſelf to you; *Matth.* 16. 22, 23. *Gal.* 1. 8, 9. Humiliation diggeth ſo deep, that it undermineth ſinne, and the fortreſs of the Devil; and when the foundation is rooted up, it will ſoone be overthrowne. When the Murderers of Chriſt were pricked to the heart, they'l then cry out for counſell to the Apoſtles. *Acts* 2. 37. When a murderer of the Saints is ſtricken blindfold to the earth, and the Spirit withall doth humble his Soul, he will then cry out, *Lord what would ſt thou have me to do?* Acts 9. 6. When a cruel Jaylour that ſcourged the Servants of Chriſt, is by an Earth-quake brought to a heart-quake, he will then cry out, *What*

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ſhall I do to be ſaved? Acts 16. 30.

And here comes in the uſefulneſs of *Afflictions*; even becauſe they are ſo great advantages to Humiliation. Men will be brought to ſome *Reaſon* by extreamities. When they lie a dying, a man may talk to them, and they will not ſo proudly fly in his face, nor make a ſcorne of the word of the Lord, as in their proſperity they did. God will be more regarded when he pleadeth with them, with the rod in his hand: ſtripes are the beſt Logick, and Rhetorick for a fool. When ſinne hath captivated their Reaſon to their fleſh, the Arguments to convince them muſt be ſuch, as the fleſh is capable of perceiving. We may long tell a beaſt of dangers, and diſcommodities, before we can perſwade him from that which he loves. Senſuality doth brutifie men in too great a meaſure: And ſo far as they are brutiſh, it is not the cleareſt Reaſons that will prevaile: And if God did not maintaine in corrupted man, ſome remnants of free Reaſon, we migh preach to beaſts as hopefully as to men. But *Afflictions* tend to weaken the Enemy that doth captivate them, as proſperity by accident tends to ſtrengthen him. The

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flesh understandeth the language of the rod, better then the language of Reason, or of the Word of God.

And as the sensible part of our Humiliation promoteth Mortification, so the rational and voluntary Humiliation, which is proper to the Sanctified, is a principal part of Mortification it self. And thus you may see that it's necessary that we be throughly humbled, that sin may be throughly killed in us.

3. Another use of Humiliation is, to fit the Soul for a meet entertainment of further Grace, and that both for the honour of Christ and Grace, and for our own welfare.

1. In respect of Christ, it is equal, that he should dwell in such Souls only as are fit to entertaine him. Neither his person, nor his business, are such as can suit with the unhumbled heart. Till Humiliation make a sinner feel, his sinne, and misery, it is not possible that Christ, as Christ, should be heartily welcome to him, or received in that sort as his honour doth expect. Who cares for the Physician that feels no sickness, and feares not death? He may pass by the doores of such a man, and he will not call him in:

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But when paine and feares of death are on him, he will send, and seek, and bid him welcome. Will any man fly to Christ for succour, that feeleth not his wants, and danger: Will they lay hold on him, as the only refuge of their Souls, and cleave to him as their only hope, that feele no great need of him? Will they lie at his feet, and beg for mercy, that feel themselves well enough without him? When men do but hear of sinne, and misery, and superficially believe it, they may coldly look after Christ, and Grace; and feel the worth of the later, in such a manner as they feel the weight of the former. But never is Christ valued and sought after as Christ, till sorrow have taught us how to value him: Nor is he entertained in the necessary honour of a Redeemer, till Humiliation throw open all the doores: No man can seek him with his *whole* heart, that seeks him not with a *broken* heart.

And it's certain that Christ will come on no lower terms into the Soul. Though he come to do us good, yet he will have the honour of doing it: Though he come to heal us, and not for any need he hath of us, yet he will have the welcome that's due

due to a Physician. He comes to save us, but he will be honoured in our Salvation. He inviteth all to the Marriage supper, and even compelleth them to come in: but he expecteth that they bring a wedding garment, and come not in a garbe that shall dishonour his house. Though his Grace be free, yet he will not expose it to contempt, but will have the fullness and freeness of it glorified. Though he came not to Redeem himself but us, yet he came to be glorified in the work of our Redemption. He hath no Grace so free, as to save them that will not esteem it, and give him thanks for it. And therefore though Faith is enough to accept the gift, yet must it be a thankfull faith, that will magnifie the giver, and a humble faith that will feele the work of it, and an obediential faith that will answer the ends of it. And therefore that faith which is the Condition of our Justification, is fitted as well to the honour of the Giver, as the commodity of the receiver. And as Reason telleth us that it *should* be so, so Christian ingenuity consenteth that it be so. The Soul that is truly united to Christ, and partaketh of his nature, doth think it's own Receiving greatest, where

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the honour of Christ is greatest: And it cannot take pleasure in the thoughts of such a kind of Grace, as should dishonour the Lord of Grace himself. As Christ is solicitous for the saving of the Soul, so that he makes the Soul solicitous of the right entertainment of him that saveth it. And therefore though his Blood, and not his Teaching or his Government was the Ransom of our Souls, yet he is resolved to Justifie none by his Blood, but on the Condition of that Faith, which is a hearty Consent to his Teaching and Dominion. It is not in the Application, or bestowing of Christ's benefits, as it was in the purchasing of them. When he came to Ransom us, he consented to be a sufferer, and gave his cheeks to the smiter, and submitted to reproach; he endured the Cross, despising the shame, and being reviled, he reviled not, but prayed for his persecutors: But when he comes by his saving Grace into the Soul, he will not there be entertained with contempt; For in the flesh he came on purpose to be humbled: but in the Spirit he comes to be exalted: In the flesh he came to condemn the sinne that reigned in our flesh,

(*Rom.* 8.

(*Rom.* 8. 3.) and so was made sinne for us (that is, a Sacrifice for sinne) (2 *Cor.* 5. 21.) But in the Spirit he comes to conquer our flesh, and by the Law of his quickning Spirit, to free us from the Law of sinne and death: both that the Righteousnes of the Law might be fullfilled in us, and also that there might be no Condemnation to us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. *Rom.* 8. 1, 2, 4. The Kingdom of Christ was not worldly; for if it had been worldly, he would have sought to establish it by strength of armes, and fighting, which are worldly means, *Joh.* 18. 36. But his Kingdom is within us: It is a Spiritual Kingdom: and therefore though in the world he was used with contempt, as a fool, and as a Sinner, and a man of sorrows; yet *within* us he will be used with honour, and reverence, as a King and absolute Lord. It was the houre of the executioner, and the power of darknes, when he was in his suffering: but it is the houre of his triumph, and marriage, and the prevailing Power of the Heavenly Light, when he cometh by Saving Grace into the Soul. On the Cross he was *as* a sinner, and stood in

our place, and bore what was our due, and not his owne. But in the Soul he is the Conquerour of ſinne, and cometh to take poſſeſſion of his own, and doth the work that belongeth to him in his dignity; and therefore he will *there* be acknowledged, and honoured. On the Croſs he was pulling down the Kingdom of Satan, and ſetting up his own, but in the preparatory purchaſe: But in the Soul he doth both by immediate execution. On the Croſs ſinne and Satan had their full blow at *him*: But when he entred the Soul, he hath his blow at them, and ceaſeth not till he have deſtroyed them. In *purchaſing* he expended his own: But in *Converting* he takes poſſeſſion of that which he purchaſed. In a word; he came into the world in fleſh for his undertaken Humiliation: but he comes into the Soul, by his Spirit, for his deſerved exaltation: And therefore though he endured to be ſpit upon in the fleſh, he will not endure to be ſleighted in the Soul: And as in the world he was ſcorned with the Title of a King, and crowned with thorns, and clothed in ſuch Kingly robes, as might make him the fitter object for their reproach: So when his

his Spirit entereth into the Soul, he will be there inthroned in our moſt reverent, ſubjective, and deepeſt eſteeme, and crowned with our higheſt Love, and Thankfullnes, and bowed to with the tenders of Obedience, and our praiſe. The Croſs ſhall there be the portion of his enemies, and the Crown and Scepter ſhall be his: and as all were preferred before him on Earth, even *Barrabas* himſelf; ſo all things ſhall be put under him in the Sanctified Soul, and he ſhall be preferred before all.

This is the end of Humiliation, to make ready the heart for a fuller entertainment of the Lord that bought it: and to prepare the way before him, and fit the Soul to be the Temple of his Spirit. A humbled Soul would never have put him off with excuſes from *Oxen*, and *Farms*, and *Wives*; As *Luke* 14. and *Matth.* 22. But the unhumbled will make light of him.

And 2. As Chriſt himſelf will be honourably recieved, or not at all, ſo muſt the Mercies, and Graces which he offereth: He will not apply his blood, and righteouſneſs to them that care not for it: He will not pardon ſuch a maſſe of

iniquity, and remove ſuch mountaines as lie upon the Soul; for them that feel not the Neceſſity of ſuch a Mercy. He will not take men from the power of the Devil, and the drudgery of ſinne, and the ſuburbs of Hell, and make them his Members, and the Sonnes of God, and the Heirs of Heaven, that have not learn't the value of theſe benefits, but ſet more by their very ſinne, and miſery, and the trifles of the world. Chriſt doth not deſpiſe his Blood, his Spirit, his Covenant, his Pardon, nor his Heavenly Inheritance: and therefore he will give them to none that do deſpiſe them, till he teacheth them better to know their worth. Do you think it would ſtand with the Wiſdom of Chriſt, to give ſuch unſpeakable bleſſings as theſe, to men that have not hearts to value them? Why, it is more to give a man Juſtification, and Adoption, then to give him all this viſible world; the Sunne, the Moone, the Firmament, and the Earth. And ſhould theſe be given to one that cares not for them. Why by this meanes God ſhould miſs of his ends: He ſhould not have the Love, the Honour, or the thanks, that he intended by his gift.

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It is neceſſary therefore that the Soul be throughly humbled, that pardon may be received as pardon, and Grace as Grace, and not ſet light by.

And 2. as this is neceſſary for the honour both of Chriſt and Grace, ſo alſo it is neceſſary for our own benefit and conſolation. The Mercy cannot indeed be ours, if Humiliation do no make us capable of it. Theſe Cordials muſt be taken into an empty Stomack, and not be drownd in flegm, and filth. A man on the Gallows will be glad of a pardon: but a ſtander by that thinks he is innocent, would not regard it, but take it for an accuſation. There is no great ſweetneſs in the name of a Redeemer, to an unhumbled Soul. It ſets not by the Spirit: the Goſpel is no Goſpel to it, the tidings of Salvation are not ſo glad, to ſuch a one, as the tidings of riches, or worldly delights would be. As it is the preparation of the Stomack that maketh our meat ſweet to us; and the courſeſt fare is pleaſanter to the ſound, then ſweetmeats to the ſick: ſo if we were not emptied of our ſelves, and vile, and loſt in our own apprehenſions, and if Contrition did not quicken our appetites, the

Lord himself, and all the miracles of his Saving Grace, would be but as a thing of nought in our eyes; and we should be but weary to heare or think of them. But O what an inestimable Treasure is Christ to the Humbled Soul. What life is in his promises? What sweetness in every passage of his grace; and what a feast in his unmeasurable Love?

4. Another Use of Humiliation, implyed in the former, is, that it is necessary to bring men to yield to the terms of the Covenant of Grace: Nature holds fast it's fleshly pleasures, and lives by feeling & upon present things, and knows not how to live upon invisibles, by a life of Faith. And this is the life that all must live, that will live in Christ: And therefore he calleth them to the forsaking of *all*, the crucifying the world and flesh, the denying of themselves, if they will be his Disciples. But O how loath is nature to part with all, and make a full resignation unto Christ: but fain it would make sure of present things, for fear left the promises of Heaven should but deceive them; and then they would have Heaven at last as a reserve. And on these terms it is that Hypocrites are Religious, and

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thus it is that they deceive their Souls. But when the heart is truly *broken*, it will then stand no longer on such terms with Christ, but yield up *all*. It will then no longer *Condition* with *him*, but stand to *his Conditions*, and thankfully accept them. Any thing will then serve, with Christ, and Grace, and the hopes of Glory.

5. Another Use of Humiliation is, to fit us for the Retaining and Improving of Grace, when we have received it. The Proverb is, *Lightly come, lightly go.* If God should give the pardon of sinne, to the unhumbled, how soon would it be cast away? And how easily would such be hearkning to temptation, and returning to their vomit. The burn't Child, we say dreads the fire. When sinne hath kill'd you once, and broken your hearts, you will think the worse of it while you live. And when a temptation comes, you will think of your former smart: *Is not this it that cost me so many groans, and laid me in the dust, and had almost damned me? and shall I go to it again? Was I so hardly recovered, by a Miracle of Mercy? And shall I runne again into the misery that I was saved from? Had I*

not ſorrow, and fear, and care enough, but I muſt go back again for more, and renew my trouble? Thus the remembrance of your ſorrows, will be a continuall preſervative to you. And a contrite ſpirit that is emptied of it ſelf, and is taught the worth of Chriſt and mercy, will not only hold them faſt, but will know how to uſe them, in thankfullneſs to God, and benefit to himſelf.

6. Another Uſe of Humiliation is, to fit the Soul for it's approach to God himſelf, from whom it had revolted. As it beſeems not any creature, to approach the God of Heaven, but in *Reverentiall* humility: ſo it beſeems not any ſinner to approach him, but in *Contrite* Humility: Who can come out of ſuch wickedneſs and miſery, and not bring along the ſenſe of it on his heart? It beſeemeth not a Prodigal to meet his Father as confidently and boldly, as if he had never departed from him: but to ſay, *Father I have ſinned againſt Heaven, and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy ſonne*, Luke 15. 18. It is not ingenious for a guilty Soul, or one that is ſnatcht as a brand out of the fire, to look towards God with a brazen face, but

but with ſhame and ſorrow, to hang down the head, and ſmite upon the breſt, and ſay, *O Lord be merciſull to me a ſinner. For God reſiſteth the proud, but giveth Grace to the humble*: 1 Pet. 5. 5. Jam. 4. 6. *Though the Lord be high, yet he hath regard unto the lowly: but the proud he knoweth afar off.* Pſal. 138. 6. *For thus ſaith the High and Holy one, that inhabiteth Eternity, whoſe Name is Holy; and I dwell in the High and Holy Place, with him alſo that is of a contrite, and humble ſpirit, to revive the ſpirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.* Iſa. 57. 15. *To this man will I look, even to him that is poore, and of a contrite ſpirit, and that trembles at my Word.* Iſa 66. 2. *The Lord is nigh to them that are of a broken h art, and ſaveth ſuch as be of a contrite ſpirit.* Pſal. 34. 18. *The Sacrifices of God are a broken ſpirit: a broken and contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not diſpiſe.* Pſal. 51. 17. There is no turning to God, unleſs we *loath our ſelves for all our abominations*, Ezek. 16. 63.

The nearer we approach him, the more we muſt *abhor our ſelves in duſt, and aſhes.* Job 42. 6. He will not embrace

brace a ſinner in his dung; but will firſt *waſh and cleanſe* him, *Iſa.* 1. 16. Converſion muſt make us humble, and as little Children, that are teachable, and look not after great matters in the world, or elſe there is no entering the Kingdom of God, *Matth.* 18. 3, 4. And thus you ſee the Uſes, and Neceſſity of Humiliation.

III. By what hath been already ſaid, you may perceive what Miſtakes are carefully to be avoided, about your Humiliation, and with what caution it muſt be ſought.

1. One Error that you muſt take heed of, is, *That you take not Humiliation for an indifferent thing*, or for ſuch an appurtenance of Faith, as may be ſpared: Think not an unhumbled Soul while ſuch can be Sanctified. Some carnal hearts conceive, that it is only more haynous ſinners, that muſt be contrite and broken hearted; and that this is not neceſſary to them that have been brought up civilly, or religiouſly from their youth. But it is as poſſible to be ſaved without Faith, as without Repentance, and that

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ſpecial Humiliation, which I deſcribed to you before. It's part of your Sanctification.

2. Another miſtake to be carefully avoided, is, *The placeing of your Humiliation, either only, or principally, in the Paſſionate part, or in the outward expreſſion of thoſe Paſſions.* I mean, either in pinching *grief*, and *ſorrow* of heart, or elſe in *tears*. But you muſt remember that the Life of it is, as was ſaid before, in the Judgment and the Will. It is not the meaſure of Paſſionate ſorrow and anguiſh, that will beſt ſhew the meaſure of your ſincere Humiliation: much leſs is it your teares, or outward expreſſions. But it is your low eſteem of your ſelves, and contentedneſs to be vile in the eyes of others: And your diſplacency with your ſelves, and willingneſs to mourn, and weep for ſinne as much as God would have you: with the reſt of the acts of the Judgment and Will before deſcribed.

Two great dangers are here before you to be avoided. Firſt, ſome there be that have terrible pangs of ſorrow, and are ready to teare their own haire, yea or make away themſelves as *Judas*, in the horror of their Conſciences: and theſe

may

may seem to have true Humiliation, and yet have none. And some can weep abundantly at a Sermon, or in Prayer, or in mentioning their sinne to others: and therefore think that they are truly humbled: and yet it may be nothing so. For if at the same time their hearts are in love with sinne, or had rather keep it then let it go, or have not an habitual hatred to it, and a predominant superlative Love to God, their Humiliation is no saving work. That which is in the Passions, and teares may be even forced against your wills: And it signifieth scarce so much as a common Grace, where you are not willing of it. Many a one can weep through a passionate, womanish, tender nature; and yet not only remain unhumbled, but be Proud in a very high degree. How many such do we ordinarily see; especially women, that can weep more at a duty or conference, then some that are truly broken hearted could do in all their lives: and yet be so far from being vile in their own eyes, and willing to be so in the eyes of others, that they will hate, and reproach, and raile at those that charge them with the faults, which they seemed to lament; or at least, that charge

charge them with diſgracefull ſinnes: and they will excuſe and mince their ſinnes, and make a ſmall matter of them, and love none ſo well, as thoſe that have the higheſt thoughts of them. So that Pride doth ordinarily reign in their hearts, and break out in their words, and lives, and make them hate the faithfulleſt reproachers, and live in contention with any that diſhonour them for all the tears that come from their eyes. Judge not therefore by paſſions, or tears alone, but by the Judgment, and the Will, as is aforeſaid.

2. Another ſort there are, much better and happier than the former, that yet to their great trouble are miſtaken in this point: And that is, they that think they have no true Humiliation, becauſe they find not ſuch pangs of ſorrow, and freedom of tears, as others have: whenas, their hearts are contrite, even when they cannot weep a tear. Tell me but this: Are you vile in your own eyes, becauſe you are guilty of ſinne, and that againſt the Lord, whom you chiefly love? Do you loath your ſinnes, becauſe of your abominations, and could you heartily wiſh, that you had been ſuffering when you

you were ſinning; and if it were to do again, would you chuſe to ſuffer rather then to ſinne? Have you a deſire to grieve, when you cannot paſſionately grieve, and a deſire to weep when you cannot weep? Can you quietly beare it, when you are vilified by others, becauſe you know your ſelves to be ſo vile? And are you thankfull to a plain Reprover, though he tell you of the moſt diſgracefull ſinne? Do you think meanly of your own ſayings and doings, and think better of others, where there is any ground, then of your ſelves? Do you juſtifie Gods afflictions, and mens true rebukes, and think your ſelves unworthy of the Communion of the Saints, or to ſee their faces; and unworthy to live on the face of the Earth? Yea would you juſtifie God, if he ſhould condemn you? This is the ſtate of a humbled Soul. Find but this, and you need not doubt of Gods acceptance, though you were unable to ſhed a tear. There's more Humiliation in a baſe eſteem of our ſelves, then in a thouſand tears: And more in a will, or deſire to weep for ſinne, then in tears, that come through force of terror, or moiſture of the brain, or paſſionate tenderneſs

derneſs of Nature. If the Will be right, you need not fear. It is he that moſt hateth ſinne, and is hardlieſt drawn to it, that is trulyeſt humbled for it. He that will lament it to day, and commit it to morrow, is far leſs humbled and penitent, then he that would not be drawn to it with the hopes of all the pleaſures of the world, nor commit it, if it were to ſave his life.

3. To avoid this, ſome runne into the contrary miſtake, and think that *ſorrow* and *teares* are unneceſſary, and that they may Repent as well without them, as with them; and they lay all in ſome dull uneffectual wiſhes; and ſo they think, the Heart is changed. But certainly God made not the Affections in vain. It cannot be that any man can have a Sanctified Will, but his Affections will hold ſome correſpondence with it, and be commanded by it. Though we cannot mourn in that Meaſure as we deſire, yet ſome ſorrow there will be wherever the Heart is truly changed. And *appretiativè* this ſorrow will be the greateſt. No man can heartily believe, that ſinne is the greateſt evil to his Soul, and not be grieved for it. And indeed our Livelieſt Affections

fections ſhould be exerciſed about theſe weighteſt things. It's a ſhame to ſee a man mourn for a friend, and whine under a Croſs that toucheth but the fleſh, and yet be ſo inſenſible of the plague of ſinne, and the anger of the Lord, and to laugh and jeſt with ſuch mountains on his Soul. Though grief, and tears be not the heart, or principal part of our Humiliation, yet are they to be lookt after as our duty; yea ſorrow in ſome meaſure, is of abſolute neceſſity: and the want of tears is no good ſigne in them that have tears, for other things. Indeed the ſenſe of our folly and unkindneſs ſhould be ſo great, that it ſhould even turn our hearts into ſorrow, and melt them in our breſts, and draw forth ſtreams of tears from our eyes: and if we cannot bring our ſelves to this; we muſt yet lament the hardneſs of our hearts, and not excuſe it.

4. In the next place, you are hence informed, how to anſwer that Queſtion, *Whether it be poſſible for a man to be humbled, and repent too much.* That part of Humiliation, which conſiſteth in the acts of the Underſtanding and the Will, *cannot* be too much as to the *Intention* of the *Act*;

Act; And if it be too much as to the *Objective extent*, then as it is misguided, so it changeth its Nature, and ceaseth to be the thing that it was before. A man may think worse of himself then he is, by thinking falsly of himself, as that he is guilty of the sinne which he is not guilty of: But this is not the same thing with true Humiliation. But to have too clear an apprehension of the evil of his sinne, and his own vileness; this he need not feare. And in the will it is more cleare: No man can be too willing to be rid of sinne, in Gods time and way; nor be too much averse from it, as it is against the Lord. But then the other part of Humiliation, which consisteth in the depth of sorrow, or in tears, may possibly be too much. Though I know very few that are guilty of it, or need to feare it; because the common case of the world, is to be stupid, and hard-hearted; and most of the Godly are lamentably insensible. But yet some few there are, that have need of this advise, that they strive not for too great a measure of grief. Let your hearts be against sinne as much as is possible: But yet let there be some limits in your grief and teare. And this

counsel is necessary to these sorts of people. 1. To Melancholly people, that are in danger of being distracted, and made unreasonable, and useless by overmuch sorrow. Their thoughts will be fixing, and musing, and sad, and dark, and full of fears, and either make things worse then they are, or else be deeplyer affected with them then their heads can beare. 2. And this is the Case of some weak spirited women, that are not Melancholly; but yet by natural weakness of their brains, and strength of their passions, are unable to endure those serious deep affecting apprehensions, which others may desire; but the depth of their sensibilitie, and greatness of their passion, doth presently endanger the crazing of their brains, and quickly cast them into Melancholly, or worse.

And this is a very heavy affliction where it comes, both to the persons themselves, and those about them. To be deprived of the Use of Reason, is one of the greatest corporall calamities in this life. And it is matter of offence, and dishonour to the Gospel, in the eyes of the ungodly, that understand not the

Case. When they see any languish in unmeasurable sorrow, or fall into distraction, it is a grievous temptation to them, to fly from Religion, and avoid godly sorrow, and all serious thoughts of heavenly things: And it occasioneth the foolish scorners to say, that Religion makes men mad; and that this Humiliation, and Conversion which we call them to, is the way to bring them out of their wits. So that by reason of the grief of the godly, and the hardening of the ungodly, the Case is so sad, that it requireth our greatest care to avoid it.

Quest. *But if it be so dangerous to sorrow either too little, or too much, what shall a poor sinner do in such a streight? And how shall he know when to restrain his sorrows?*

Answ. It is but very few in the world, that have cause to feare excess of this kind of sorrow. The common Case of men, is to be blockish, and worldly sorrow doth cast more into Melancholly, and distractions then godly sorrow: But for those few that are in danger of excess, I shall first tell you how to discern it, and then how to remedie it.

1. When your sorrow is greater then

your brains can bear, without apparent danger of deſtraction, or a Melancholly diſturbance and deminution of your Underſtanding, then it is certainly too much, and to be reſtrained. For if you overthrow your Reaſon, you will be a reproach to Religion, and you will be fit for nothing that's truly good, either to your own Edification, or the Service of God.

2. If you be in any grievous diſeaſe, which ſorrow would increaſe, to the hazzard of your life, you have reaſon to reſtrain it: Though you may not forbear Repenting, or Carefulneſs of your Salvation; yet the Paſſion of grief you muſt moderate and abate.

3. When ſorrow is ſo great as to diſcompoſe your mind, or enfeeble your body, ſo as to un-fit you for the ſervice of God, and make you more unable to do good, or receive good, you have reaſon then to moderate and reſtrain it.

4. When the greatneſs of your ſorrow, doth overmatch the neceſſary meaſure of your Love, or Joy, or Thanks, and keep out theſe, and takes up more of your ſpirit then its part, having no room

room for greater duties, then it is exceſſive and is to be reſtrained. There are ſome that will ſtrive and ſtruggle with their hearts, to wring out a few tears, and increaſe their ſorrow, that yet make little Conſcience of other affections, and will not ſtrive half ſo much to increaſe their Faith, and Love, and Joy.

5. When your ſorrow by the greatneſs of it, doth draw you into temptation, either to deſpair, or think hardly of God and his Service, or to undervalue his Grace, and the Satisfaction of Chriſt, as if it were too ſcant, and inſufficient for you; you have then cauſe to moderate and reſtrain it.

6. When your ſorrow is unſeaſonable, and will needs thruſt in at thoſe times, when you are called to Thankfullneſs, and Joy, you have then cauſe to moderate, and reſtrain it at that ſeaſon. Not that we ſhould *wholly* lay by ſorrow in any day of Joy and Thanksgiving: unleſs we could lay by all our ſinne in the duties of that day: Nor ſhould we *wholly* lay by Spiritual comfort and delight, in daies of greateſt Humiliation. For as our ſtate is here mixt, of Grace and ſinne, ſo muſt all our duties be mixt of

Joy and Sorrow: It is only in Heaven where we must have unmixed Joyes, and only in Hell that there are unmixed sorrows; or at least, not in any state of Grace. But yet for all that, there are seasons now, when one of these must be more eminently exercised, and the other in a lower measure. As in times of Calamity, and after a fall, we are called out so much to Humiliation, that Comfort should but moderate our sorrows, and the exercise of it be veiled for that time; so in times of Special Mercies from the Lord, we may be called out to exercise our Thanks, and Praise, and Joy so eminently, that sorrow should but keep us humble, and be, as it were, serviceable to our Joies. When Grace and Mercy is most eminent, then Joy and Praise should be predominant (which is through the most of a Christians life, that walketh uprightly and carefully with God:) And when sinne and Judgments are most eminent, sorrow must be then predominant, as being a necessary means to solid Joy. And therefore ordinarily a sinner that is but in the work of Conversion, and newly coming to God from a rebellious state, must entertain more

sorrow,

sorrow, and let out himself more to groanes and tears then afterward, when he is brought to Reconciliation with God, and walketh in integrity.

Quest. *But when is it that my sorrow is too short, and I should labour to increase it?*

Answ. 1. When there is no apparent danger of the last-mentioned evils, that is, Of destroying your bodies, distracting your brains, discomompoſing your minds, and drowning other Graces and duties, and the rest; then you have little cause to be afraid of an excess.

2. When you have not smart enough to cause you to value the Love of Christ, and highly prise his blood, and the effects of it, and hunger and thirst after him and his righteousness, and earnestly beg for the pardon of your sinne; you have cause to desire the more sorrow: If you feel no great need of Christ, but pass by him as lightly as the full stomack by his food, as if you could do well enough without him; you may be sure then you have need to be broken more. If you set not so much by the Love of God, that you would part with any thing in the world to enjoy it, and would think no

terms too dear for Heaven: You have need to lie under the ſence of your ſinne and miſery a little longer, and to beſeech the Lord to ſave you from that heart of ſtone. When you can hear of the Love and ſufferings of your Redeemer, without any warmth of Love to him again, and can read or hear the promiſes of Grace, and offers of Chriſt, and Eternall life, without any conſiderable Joy, or Thankfullneſs, it's time for you then to beg of God a tender heart.

3. When you make many pawſes in the work of your Converſion, and are ſometime in a good mind, and then again at a ſtand, as if you were yet unreſolved whether to turn or no; When you ſtick at Chriſt terms of denying your ſelves, and crucifying the fleſh, and forſaking all, for the hopes of Glory; and think theſe ſayings ſomewhat hard, and are conſidering of the matter whether you ſhould yield to them or not; or are ſecretly Reſerving ſomewhat to your ſelves; this certainly ſhews, that you are not yet ſufficiently humbled, or elſe you would never ſtand trifling thus with God. He muſt yet ſet your ſinnes in order before you, and hold you a while

over

over the fire of Hell, and ring your Consciences such a peal, as shall make you yield, and resolve your doubts, and teach you not to dally with your maker. If *Pharaoh* himself be off and on with God, and sometime he will let *Israel* goe, and then again he will not; God will follow him with plague after plague, till he make him yield, and glad to drive, or hasten them away. And even where he deals in waies of Grace, he maketh so much use of sorrows, as to make men yield the sooner to his terms, and glad to have Mercy on such terms, if they were harder.

4. When you are heartless and dull under the Ordinances of God, and Scripture hath little life, or sweetness to you, and you are almost indifferent whether you call upon God in secret, or no; and whether you go to the Congregation, and heare the Word, and joyn in Gods Praises, and the Communion of the Saints, and you have no great relish in holy Conference, or any Ordinance, but do them almost meerly for custom, or to please your Consciences, and not for any great need you feel of them, or good you find by them; this shews for

certain

certain you want some more of the rod, and spurre; your hearts be not wakened and broken sufficiently, but God must take you in hand again.

5. When you can be mindless of God, and of the life to come, and forget both your sinne, and Saviours Blood, and let out your thoughts almost continually upon worldly vanities, or common things, as if you were over-grown the need of Christ; this shews that the stone is yet in your hearts, and that God must keep you to a harder dyet to mend your appetites, and make you feel your sinne, and misery, till it call off your thoughts from things that less concern you, and teach you to mind your Everlasting state. If you begin to forget your selves and him, it's time for you to have a remembrancer.

6. When you begin to tast more sweetness in the creature, and be more tickled with applause and honour, and pleased more with a full estate, and more impatient with poverty, or wants, or wrongs from men, and crosses in the world; and when you are set upon a thriving course, and are eager to grow rich, and fall in love with money, when

you

you drown your selves in worldly cares, and busines, and are combred about many things, through your own choice; this shews indeed that you are dangerously unbumbled; and if God have Mercy for you, he will bring you low, and make your riches gall and wormwood to you, and abate your appetite, and teach you to know that one thing is needfull; and so be more eager after the food that perisheth not; and hereafter to choose the better part. *Luke* 10. 41, 42. *Job* 6. 27.

7. When you can return to play with the occasions of sinne, or look upon it with a reconcileable mind, as if you had yet some mind on it, and could almost find in your heart to be doing with it again, when you begin to have a mind of your old company and courses, or begin to draw as neare it as you dare, and are gazing upon the bait, and casting of the forbidden thing, and can scarce tell how to deny your fancies, your appetites, your fained their desires; this shews that you want some awakening work: God must yet read you another lecture in the black book, and set you to spell those lines of blood which it

seems

ſeems you have forgotten; and kindle a little of that fire in your Conſciences, which elſe you would runne into; till you feel and underſtand, whether it be good playing with ſinne, and the Wrath of God, and the Everlaſting fire.

8. When you begin to be indifferent as to your Communion with God, and think not much whether he accept you, and manifeſt his love to you or not, but can huddle up your prayers, and look no more after them, or what becomes of them, and uſe Ordinances and ſeldom enquire of the ſucceſs: When you can ſpare the Spiritual Conſolations of the Saints, and fetch little of your comfort from Chriſt, or Heaven; but from your friends, and health, and proſperity, and accomodations; and perhaps can be as merry in carnal company, when you ſay and do as they, as if you were conſidering of the Love of Chriſt: this ſhews that the threatnings went not deep enough. Sorrow hath yet another part to play: You muſt be taught better to know your home, and to take more pleaſure in your father, and your husband, and your brethren, and your Inheritance, then in ſtrangers, or enemies to God and you.

9. When

9. When you begin to grow wanton with Ordinances, or other Mercies, and in stead of thankfull receiving them, and feeding on them, you pick quarrells with them, and nothing will please you: either the Minister is too weak; or he is too curious, or too formall; you must have it this way or that way; either you must have more of a form, or no form; in this gesture, or that order, and something or other is still amiss: this shews that you want humbling, and that you are fitter for the rod, then for meat. If God do but open you a doore into your hearts, and shew you the monsters and emptyness that is there, you will then see, that the fault lay somewhere else then in the Minister, or the Ordinances: If it were in them, it was more in you. The cause of your loathing, and quarrelling with the Word, was the fullness of your own stomack; and God must give you a vomit, or purge, that shall make your hearts ake before it hath done working, and then your appetite will be mended, and your wantonness will cease, and that will be sweet to you which before you sleighted.

10. When you begin to be leavened with

with Pride, and think highly of your selves, and have good conceits of your own parts and performances, and would be noted, and taken for some body among the godly, and you cannot endure to be overlookt, or past by: when you think meanly of other mens parts, and dutys, in comparison of yours, and think your selves as wise as your Teachers, and begin to hear them as *Judas* magisterial spirit, and think you could do as well as this your selves; when you are finding fault with that which should nourish you, and in every Sermon you are most noting the defects, and think that this you could have mended; when you itch to be Teachers your selves, and think your selves fitter to preach then to learn, to rule then to be ruled, to answer then to ask for resolution; when you think so well of your selves, that the Church is not pure or good enough for your company, though Christ disowneth it not, and they force you not to sinne; when you grow censorious; and aggravate the faults of others, and extenuate their graces, and can see a mote in another's eye, but will discern none of their Graces, if they be not as high

high as mountains, and none can pass for Godly with you, but those of the most eminent magnitude; when you are itching after novelties in Religion, and setting your wisdom against the present, or ancient Church; and affecting singularity because you will be of no common way; when you cannot heare this Minister, nor that Minister, though the Ministers of Christ; and you are harping upon that, *Come out from among them, and be yee separate*; as if Christ had called you to come out of the Church, when he called you to come out of the company of Infidels: All this cries aloud for further Humiliation: You have a tympanie that must be prickt, to let out the wind that puffs you up. If you be not for perdition, and to be forsaken, and given over to your selves, you must be fetcht over again and humbled with a witness. When God hath turned your inside outward, and shewed you that you are poor, and miserable, and blind, and naked, and that you are empty Nothings, who thought so well of your selves; he will then make you stoop to those that you despised, and think your selves unworthy of the Communion of those that before

before you thought unworthy of your ſelves. He will make you think your ſelves unworthy to hear thoſe Miniſters that you turned your back upon; and he will take down your Teaching, talking vaine, and make you glad again to be learners: In a word, he will by Converſion make you as little Children, or you ſhall never enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.

And this ſpiritual Pride is a moſt lamentable diſeaſe, and the iſſue uſually is exceeding ſad. For with many, 'tis the fore-runner of damnable Apoſtacy, and God gives them once to their own conceits, and the wiſdom which they ſo eſteem, till it have led them to perdition. And thoſe that are cured, are many of them cured by the ſaddeſt way of any men in the world. For it is uſual with God to let them alone, till they have runne themſelves into ſome abominable errour, or fallen into ſome ſhamefull ſcandalous ſinne, till they are made a hiſſing and by-word among men; that ſhame and confuſion may bring them to their wits, and they may learn to know what it was that they were Proud of, and ſee that they were but ſilly worms.

And

And thus I have shewed you, when you must seek after deeper Humiliation, and may conclude that you are not humbled enough: Yea and when a greater measure, is of some *Necessity* to your Souls.

Quest. *Well, but yet you have not told us what course a poor Sinner should take in such a strait, when he knows not whether his Humiliation, as to the Affectionate part, be too little or too much?*

Answ. 1. You may partly discern your selves by what is said, whether you have need of more or less Humiliation, if you can but try your hearts by these signes. 2. But yet I would advise, and earnestly perswade you, in Cases of difficulty, to betake your selves to some able faithfull Minister for resolution. If you feel sorrow seize so deep upon your spirits, that it distempereth you, or threatneth your understanding, or your health, especially if your are either passionate women, or Melancholly persons, stay not then any longer, lest delay do that which cannot easily be undon, but go and open your case, and crave advice. This is a principal Use of Pastors, that you should have them at hand, to advise

with in the diſeaſes and dangers of your Souls, as you do with Phyſicians, in the diſeaſes and dangers of the body. Lay by all ſinfull baſhfullneſs, and truſt not your ſelves any longer with your own skill, but go to them that God hath ſet in Office over you for ſuch uſes as theſe, and tell them your Caſe: This is Gods way; and he will bleſs his own Ordinance: Melancholly, and Paſſionate diſtempered perſons, are not fit judges of their own condition. In this Caſe you muſt diſtruſt your own underſtanding, and be not ſelfconceited, and ſtick not obſtinately to every fancy that comes into your heads, but in the ſenſe of your weakneſs rely upon the guidance of your faithfull Overſeers; till your diſtempers are overcome, and you are made more capable of diſcerning for your ſelves.

5. You are further here to be informed, that it is not for it ſelfe that ſorrow and tears are ſo deſireable; but as they are expreſſions of a gracious temper of the will, and as they help on to the Ends that Humiliation is appointed to. And therefore you may hence learn in what

sort you must seek after it. 1. You must not place the chief part of your Religion in it, as if it were a life of meer sorrow, that we are called to by the Gospel. But you must make it a servant to your Faith, and Love, and Joy in the Holy Ghost, and other Graces. As the use of the needle is but to make way for the thred, and then it is the thred and not the needle that makes the seam: So much of our sorrow is but to prepare for Faith and Love, and these are they that close the Soul with Christ. It is therefore a sore mistake of some, that are very apprehensive of their want of sorrow, but little of their want of Faith, or Love: and that pray and strive to break their hearts, or weep for sinne, but not much for those higher Graces, which it tendeth to. One must be done, and not the other left undone.

2. As tears are the Expressions of the heart, so those are the most kindly and sincere, which voluntarily flow from the inward feeling of the evill that we lament. If you could weep never so much, meerly because you think that tears are in themselves necessary, and had not within, the hatred of sinne, and sense

of its vile and killing nature; this were not true Humiliation at all. And if the Heart be humbled before the Lord, it is not the want of tears that will cause him to despise it. Some are so backward to weep by Nature, that they cannot weep for any outward thing, no not for the loss of the deareſt friend, when yet they would have done ten times more to redeem his life, then some that have tears at will. Groans are as sure Expreſſions of sorrow as tears, with such as these. And the hearty rejecting and detestation of sinne, is yet a better Evidence then either. But where men have naturally a weeping disposition, which they can manifeſt about Crosses in the world, and yet cannot shed a tear for sinne, there the Case is the most suspicious.

3. The principal Cause why you must strive for deeper sorrow, is, that you may obtaine the Ends of that sorrow; that sinne may be more odious to you, and more effectually mortified: that self may be taken down, and Christ may be valued, and desired, and exalted, and that you may be fitted for a Holy Communion with God for the time to come, and saved from Pride, and kept in watchfullneſs.

6. From

6. From this that was last said you have a Rule by which you may certainly discern, what measure of Humiliation it is that must be had. It mst go so deep as to undermine our Pride, and so far the heart must needs be broken, as is necessary to break the heart of sinne, and carnal self. If this be not done ther's nothing done, though you weep out your eyes. You must be brought so low, that the blood of Christ, and the favour of God, may be more precious in your eyes then all the world, and in your very hearts prefered before it: And then you may be sure that your Humiliation is sincere, whether you have teares or none.

7. From hence also you may see, that you must take heed of ascribing to your own Humiliation, any part of the office and honour of Christ: Think not that you can satisfie the Justice of the Law, or merit any thing of God by the worth of your sorrows, though you should weep even tears of blood. It is not true Humiliation if it consist not in the sense and acknowledgment of your unworthy-

neſs, and deſert of condemnation, and if it do not lead you to look out for pardon and life from Chriſt, as being loſt and wholly inſufficient for your ſelves. And therefore it would be a plain contradiction, if true Humiliation ſhould be taken as Satisfaction, or Merit, or truſted on inſtead of Chriſt.

IV. Having thus far opened the Nature and Reaſons of true Humiliation, I conclude with that advice which I principally here intended: Refuſe not to be throughly and deeply humbled. Be not weary of the humbling workings of the Spirit. Grief is an unwelcome gueſt to Nature: but Grace can ſee Reaſon to bid it welcome. Grace is ingenious, and cannot look back on ſo great unkindneſs, with unwillingneſs to mourne over it, *Zech.* 12. 10. There is ſomewhat of God in godly ſorrow, and therefore the Soul conſenteth to it, and ſeeketh for it, and calls it in: Yea and is grieved that it can grieve no more. Not that ſorrow as ſorrow is deſireable; but as a neceſſary Conſequent of our grievous ſinning, and a neceſſary Antecedent of our further recovery:

recovery: As we may ſubmit to Death it ſelf, with a cheerful willingneſs, becauſe it is ſanctified to be the paſſage into Glory, how dreadfull ſoever it be to Nature in it ſelf: ſo much more may we ſubmit to Humiliation and brokenneſs of heart, with a holy willingneſs, becauſe it is ſanctified to be the entrance into the ſtate of Grace. Conſider for your ſatisfaction of theſe following things.

1. The main brunt of your ſorrows will be but in the beginning: and when once you are ſetled in a holy courſe, you will finde more Peace and comfort, then ever you could have had in any other way. I know if you will be medling with ſinne again, it will in its meaſure breed ſorrow again: But a godly life, is a life of Uprightneſs; & Converſion is a departing from ſinne, and conſequently a departing from the Cauſe of ſorrows. And can you not bear ſuch a ſorrow for a little while?

2. Conſider but whence you are coming? Is it not out of a ſtate of wrath? And where you have been all this while? Was it not in the power of Satan? And and what you have been doing all your lives? Hath it not been the drudgery of ſinne, and the offending of your Lord,

and the destroying of your selves? And is it meet, is it reasonable, is it ingenious, for you to come out of such a Case, without lamentation that you staid in it so long?

3. Consider also, that it is Necessary to your own recovery and Salvation. Do you think to take so dangerous a surfeit, and then to be cured without a Vomit? You will endure for the health of your bodies, the bittereſt pills, and loathſomeſt potions, the ſhorteſt dyet, and the letting out of your blood: for you know that your life lieth on it, and there is no remedy. And ſhould you not endure for the ſaving of your Souls, the bittereſt ſorrows, the keeneſt rebuks, the freeſt Confeſſions, and the moſt plentiful tears? Sinne will not down at eaſier rates: *Self* will not be conquered elſe: The heart of *it* will not be broken, till *your* hearts be broken. We know your ſorrows Merit nothing, and make not God amends for your ſinnes; nor is it for want of ſufficiency in the blood of Chriſt that we require them. But it is part of the fruit of his Blood upon your Souls. If his Blood do not melt and break your hearts, you have no part in him. It becomes you to

mourn

mourn over him whom you have pierced, *Zech.* 12. 10. And this fruit of his Blood is a preparative to more. You may as well think of being saved without Faith, as without Repentance, and Humiliation.

4. Consider so much as it bitter in it, is of your own preparation: You may thank your selves for it. Who was it that brought you to this Necessity of sorrow? Have you been all your life time surfeiting of the creature, and causing your own disease, and now will you grudg at the trouble of a cure? Whom have you to blame, and find fault with but your selves: was it not you that sinned? was it not you that laid in the fuel of sorrows, and sowed the seeds of this bitter fruit, and cherished the Cause of trouble in your selves? God did not do this: It was you your selves. He doth but undo that which you have been doing. Grudg not therefore at your Physician, if you must be purged, and let blood, and dieted strictly, but thank your selves for it that have made it so necessary.

5. Consider also that you have a wise and tender Physician, that hath known what sorrow and grief is himself, for he

was

was made for you a man of ſorrows, *Iſa.* 53. 3. And therefore can pitty thoſe that be in ſorrow. He delighteth not in your trouble, and grief; but in your Cure and after-conſolations. And therefore you may be ſure that he will deal gently and moderately with you: and lay no more on you then is neceſſary for your good: Nor give you any bitterer a cup, then your diſeaſe doth require. When he ſheweth his greateſt liking of the contrite; it is that he may Revive their hearts; and he profeſſeth withall, that he will not contend for ever, nor be alwaies wrath, leſt the Spirit ſhould fail before him, and the Souls which he hath made, *Iſa.* 57. 15. 16. He calls to him the weary and heavy laden, that he may give them eaſe, *Matth.* 11. 28. He was ſent to heale the broken hearted, to preach deliverance to the Captives, and recovering of ſight to the blind, and to ſet at liberty them that are bruiſed, *Luke* 4. 18. When he hath broken your hearts he will as tenderly bind them up, and as ſafely heal them as you can reaſonably deſire. Even his *Miniſters* that labour to break your hearts, and bring you low, even to the duſt, have no

worſe

worſe meaning in it then to bring you to Chriſt, and life, and comfort: And though they are glad to ſee the weeping eyes of their hearers, and to heare their free Confeſſions and Lamentations, yet this is not becauſe they take pleaſure in your trouble, but becauſe they foreſee the ſaving fruits of it, and know it to be neceſſary to your Everlaſting Peace. You may read what their thoughts are in the words of *Paul*, 2 *Cor.* 7. 9, 10, 11. *Now I rejoyce, not that ye were made ſorry, but that ye ſorrowed to Repentance: for ye were made ſorry after a godly manner, that ye might receive dammage by us in nothing. For godly ſorrow worketh Repentance to Salvation, not to be Repented of; but the ſorrow of the world worketh death. For behold this ſelf-ſame thing that ye ſorrowed after a godly ſort, what carefullneſs it wrought in you; yea what clearing of your ſelves; yea what indignation; yea what fears; yea what vehement deſire; yea what zeal; yea what revenge;* &c. Indeed neither Chriſt, nor his Miniſters have that fond and fooliſh love to you, and pitty of you, as you have to your ſelves: They be not ſo tender of you, as

to

to save you from the sorrow which is needfull to the saving of you from Hell. But they would not put you to any more then needs : nor have you tast a drop of the vinegar and gall, or shed one teare, but what shall tend to your comfort and Salvation.

6. Consider what sorrows they be that these sorrows do prevent, and what those suffer in Hell, that avoid this godly sorrow on earth. O Sirs, your Repentance-sorrows are joyes to those: Yours have Hope; but theirs are quickned with desperation : Yours are small, and but a drop to their Ocean : Yours are Curing; but theirs are Tormenting: Yours are a Fathers Rod : but theirs are the Rack and Gallows : Yours are mixt with love; but theirs are unmixed, overwhelming them with confusion : Yours are short; but theirs are endless. And had you rather sorrow as they do, then as the godly do? Had you rather howl with Devils and rebels, then weep with Saints and Children? Had you rather be broken in Hell by Torments, then on earth by Grace? Is it not an unreasonable thing of you, to make such a stir at the sorrow that must save you; when

you

you remember what it would save you from, and what all must suffer that are not Humbled here by Grace. O it is another kind of sorrow that others are now enduring. Grudg not at the pricking of a vein, when so many thousands are everlastingly bleeding at the heart.

7. Consider, The more you are rightly Humbled, the sweeter will Christ and all his Mercies be to you ever after while you live. One taste of the healing Love of Christ, will make you bless those sorrows that prepared for it. The same Christ is not equally esteemed even by all that he will save: And had you not rather be emptied yet more of your selves, that you may be fuller of Christ hereafter? When you do but feel his arms embracing you, and perceive him in that posture as the prodigal's Father was, *Luke* 15. 20. You will thank that sorrow that fitted you for his armes.

8. If you be throughly humbled, you will walk the more safely all your daies, *if other things correspond.* It will make you hate the sinne you smarted by, and fly the occasions of that which cost you once so dear.

9. The sinne of Pride, is one of the most

moſt mortal damning ſins, in the world, and that which thouſands of profeſſors do miſcarry by. And Humiliation is moſt directly contrary to this: and therefore muſt needs be an amiable and neceſſary thing. It's worth all the ſorrow that a hundred men endure here, to be ſaved from this dangerous ſinne of Pride.

10. A through Humiliation is uſually a ſigne of the greater Exaltation to come after. *For thoſe that humble themſelves ſhall be exalted; and thoſe that exalt themſelves ſhall be brought low*, Luke 14. 11. *Humble your ſelves therefore under the mighty hand of God, and he ſhall lift you up*, 1 Pet. 5. 5. The higher you mean to build, the deeper you will dig to lay the foundation. Your Conſolations are like to be greater, as your ſorrows have been greater. You may be free from thoſe doubts that follow others all their daies, leſt they were never truly humbled. You need not be ſtill queſtioning, or pulling up your foundations, as if you were to begin again. It is a ſign that you are intended to greater employments (if other things concurre.) *Paul* muſt be laid exceeding low in his Converſion, that he might be the fitter as a

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chosen Vessel, to bear Christs Name among the Gentiles.

Lay all this now together Sirs, and consider what cause you have to cherish the Humbling works of Grace, and not to quench them. When your hearts begin to be afflicted for sinne, go not among foolish and merry Companions, to drink or laugh it away: drive it not out of your minds, as unkindly, as if it came to do you hurt: But get alone, and consider of the matter, and on your knees in secret, beseech the Lord to follow it home, and break your hearts, and make you meet for his healing consolations, and not to leave you in this red sea, but to bring you through, and put the Songs of praise into your mouths.

DIRECT. V. Having thus directed you about your Humiliation, the next Direction which I would offer you, that you may not miscarry in the worke of Conversion, is this: *See that you close with the Lord Jesus Christ, understandingly, heartily, and entirly as he is revealed, and offered to you in the Gospel.* In this your Christianity doth consist: Upon this

this your Justification, and Salvation &c. This is the summe of your Conversion; and the very heart of the New creature. The rest is all but the preparatives to this, or the fruits of this. Christ is the end and the fulfiling of the Law; the substance of the Gospel; the way to the Father: the life, the help, the hope of the Believer. If you know not him, you *know* nothing: If you possess not him, you *have* nothing: And if you are out of him, you *can do* nothing; that hath a promise of Salvation. And therefore I shall distinctly (though briefly) tell you what it is to *close with Christ, Understandingly, heartily, and entirely, as he is offered in the Gospel.*

And 1. That you may close with Christ *Understandingly*, you must look to these things: 1. That you understand who Christ is, as in his Person and his Offices: 2. That you understand the *Reason* of his undertaking: 3. That you understand, what it is that he hath done and suffered for us. 4. That you understand the Nature and worth of his benefits, and what he *will* do for you. 5. That you understand the terms on which he conveyeth these benefits to men; and

what

what is the nature, extent, and condition of his promiſes. And 6. that you underſtand the *Certain Truth*, of all this.

For the firſt, you muſt underſtand, that Jeſus Chriſt hath two Natures in one Perſon: that he is both *God and Man*: As he is *God*, he is of the ſame ſubſtance with his Father, and one in eſſence with him; the Second Perſon in the Bleſſed Trinity; the Word of God; the only begotten Sonne of the Father; Eternal, Incomprehenſible, and Infinite: As *Man*, he hath a true Humane Soul and body as men have: ſo that his Godhead, his Humane Soul, and his Body, are really diſtinct. This Humane Nature was conceived by the Holy Ghoſt in the Virgin *Mary*, without man, and born of of her, and is ſo truly united to the Divine Nature, as that they are one Perſon: Not that the Godhead is turned into the manhood, nor the manhood into the Godhead; but the Godhead hath taken the manhood into *Perſonal* Unity with it ſelf. This was not from Eternity, but when man had ſinned, and had loſt himſelf, and needed a Redeemer. By reaſon of his Miraculous Conception, he was free from all Original ſinne,

being holy, harmleſs, and undefiled. His Perſon, and Natures, were fit for his Office; which was to be the Mediator between God and man, to make Reconciliation and recover us to God. Had he not been God, but meer man, his dignity would not have been ſufficient for ſuch an interpoſition, nor his obedience or ſufferings, of any ſuch value, as to be the price of our Redemption: Nor could he have born our burden, or conquered death, and riſen again, and overcome the Prince of death, the Devil; nor have ruled his Church, and preſerved, and ſanctified them, and proſpered his Cauſe, and ſubdued his enemies, nor effectually interceded with the Father, nor judged the world, or raiſed the dead, and done the work of a perfect Saviour. Nor was the Angelical Nature ſufficient for this Office. Had he not been man, he had not been neer enough to us, to have ſuffered in our ſtead, and taught us by his Doctrin, and given us his Example, nor could he have ſuffered, or dyed for us: For God cannot die or ſuffer. As he is God he is One in Nature with the Father; and as he is man, he is One in Nature with us: and

therefore

therefore is fit to Mediate for us; and in him we are brought thus nigh to God. To this Office of the Mediator there are many acts belonging, from whence it hath several denominations, of which more anon. So much of Christ's Person.

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2. The next thing that you must understand, is, the *Reason and Ends* of his Undertaking; which though we are not able fully to comprehend (nor the Reason of any of the works of God,) yet must we observe so much as is revealed. And these following Ends or Reasons of this work, do shew themselves clearly in the Scripture, and in the event.

1. One is, *The Demonstration of Gods Justice, as he is Governor of the world, according to the Law of Nature.* He made man rational and a voluntary Agent, capable of Good or Evil, with Desires and Hopes of the Good, and fears of the Evil; and so to be ruled according to his Nature. He made for him a Law that Revealed Good and Evil, with Promises to move him by Desire, and Hope, and with Threatnings to drive him by ne-

ceſſary Fear. By theſe engins God reſolved to govern mankind. This Law was the Rule of mans *Duty*, and of his *Receivings*, or of Gods Judgment: According to this Law, the world was to be Governed by God. His Governing Juſtice conſiſteth in giving all their Due, according to his Law: At leaſt ſo far as that the End of the Law may be attained, that is, the honour of the Law-giver preſerved, tranſgreſſion made odious by the terror of penalty, and obedience made honourable by its fruits of impunity and reward: Otherwiſe the Law would not have deterred effectually from Evil, nor encouraged to Good, eſpecially to ſo much as Creatures muſt go through for the Crown of Life: And ſo the Law would have been no fit Inſtrument for the Government of the world: that is, the Law would have been no Law. But this the Wiſe and Righteous God would not be guilty of, of making a Law that was no Law; and was unmeet for the ends, to which he made it; which was eſſential to it as a Law. There was no way to avoid this intollerable conſequent, when man had ſinned, but *ſtrict execution* of the Law, or by *ſufficient Satisfaction*

faction in stead of such an Execution. The Execution would have destroyed the Commonwealth, even the whole inferior world, at least, the reasonable Creature who was the Subject. The Wisdom, and Love, and Mercy of God would not give way to this, that the world should be destroyed so soon after it was made, and man left remediless in everlasting Misery: Satisfaction therefore must be the Remedy: This must be such as might be as fit to procure the Ends of the Law, as if the Law it self had been executed, that is; as if the offendors had all dyed the death that it did threaten. It must therefore be a publik Demonstration of Justice, and of the odiousness of Sinne, to the terrour, and warning of sinners for the future: And this was done by Jesus Christ, when none else in Heaven, or Earth could do it: For it did as fully demonstrate this Justice of God, and preserved his honour, and the usefullness of his Law and government, that a Person so high and Glorious, and so dear to him, should suffer so much for sinne, as if all the world had suffered for themselves. And thus God *made him to be sinne for us, who knew no sinne.* 2 Cor. 5.

21. And thus *Christ hath Redeemed us from the Curse of the Law, being made a Curse for us*, Gal. 3. 13.

2. Hereby also God *Demonstrated the Holiness of his Nature:* How much he hateth sinne; and how unreconcilable he is to it; as light to darkness: As the Law and Judgments of God do proceed from his Perfect Nature and Will, so do they bear the Image of that perfection, and demonstrate it to the world. This therefore is the nobler End, and work of Christ in our redemption, to declare the Holiness and Perfection of God in his Nature and Will; though the former (the declaring of his Governing Justice) be the neerer End. If the death of *Aarons* two sonnes were such a Declaration, *that God will be sanctified in all that draw neer him*. Lev. 10. 2, 3, If his Laws and present Judgments do declare him to be *a Holy and Jealous God, that will not forgive sinne (without a valuable consideration, or satisfaction)* Jos. 24. 19. *how much more evidently is this declared in the death of Christ? If the Bethshemites cry out, Who is able to stand before this Holy Lord God?* 1 Sam. 6. 20. Upon the death of 50070 men; how much

much more may the guilty Soul say so, when he thinks on the Crucified Sonne of God? As it is the End of Gods execution on transgressors, that *the Lord may be exalted in Judgment, and God that is Holy may be Sanctified in Righteousness*, Isa. 5. 16. So was it his End in the Sacrifice of his Sonne.

3. Another End of our Redemption by Christ, is the *Demonstration of the Infinite Wisdom of God.* His *Wisdom* in the preventing the ruin of the late-created world; that it might not be said that sin and Satan had frustrated him of the Glory of his Creation, and destroyed it almost as soon as he had made it: Yea in getting an advantage by the malice of his enemies, for the more admirable attainment of the Ends of his Law, and the Glorifying of all his Governing Attributes: He would not have made man a free Agent, and left him in the hand of his own will, and suffered him to sinne, if his Wisdom had not known how to *secure* his own Intrest and Honour to the full. And so also in the œconomy and admirable frame of his Gracious Sapiential Government by Christ, the manifold Wisdom of God doth shine forth, *Ephes.* 3. 9, 10. As

the wonderfull ſtructure of Heaven, and Earth, and every part of this Natural frame, doth glorioufly reveale the Wiſdom of the Creator; ſo the wonderfull Contrivance of our Redemption by Chriſt, and the Reparation of the world by him, and the Moral frame of this Evangelical diſpenſation, doth wonderfully demonſtrate the Wiſdom of the Redeemer. And as the obſervation of our Natures, may give us Cauſe to ſay with *David*, *Pſal.* 139. 14. *I will praiſe thee, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made.* So the obſervation of our new Natures and condition, may well cauſe us to ſay, *I will praiſe thee; for I am graciouſly and wonderfully Redeemed, marvelous are thy Works, and that my Soul knoweth right well.* As Nature may teach us to admire the frame of Nature; ſo Grace will teach us to admire the frame of Grace; and to ſee the beauty of its ſeveral parts; and much more of the *whole* where all the parts are orderly compoſed.

4. Yea *the very Power of God is demonſtrated in Chriſt.* And therefore he is called, 1 *Cor.* 1. 24. *The Power of God, and the Wiſdom of God:* not only *formally*, becauſe Chriſt himſelf is the *Wiſe and Power-*

Powerfull God; nor only *Efficiently*, because God doth *exercise his Power* and Wisdom, by his Sonne in Creation, Redemption, and Government; but also *Effectually* and *Objectively*, as Christ is the great and most admirable *Demonstration*, of the *Power and Wisdom of God*, in the world.

What work transcendeth the incomprehensible Miracle of the Incarnation? That God should assume the Nature of man into personal Union? The Creation of the Sunne; is no greater a work of *Power*, then the Incarnation, and sending of the Sonne of God, the Intellectual Sunne, the Light of the world, *That living Light, that lighteth every one that cometh into the world: though yet the darkness comprehendeth not his light.* Joh. 1. 4, 6, 9. What was he but the living visable Power of God, when he healed all diseases, cast out Devils, raised the dead, and rose from the dead himself, and ascended into Glory, and sent down the Holy Spirit on his Church, enduing them with *Power* from on high. *Acts* 1. 8. *Luke* 24. 49. when he was on Earth, he was *Anointed with the Holy Ghost, and with Power, and went about*

about doing good, and healing all that were oppreſſed of the Devil, Acts 10. 38. Being dead *he was declared to be the Sonne of God with Power, by the Reſurrection from the dead*, Rom. 1. 4. *When he aſcended up on high, he led captivity captive*, Eph. 4.8. Yea, he filled his ſervants with power, *Act.* 6.8. Even ſuch as was admired and deſired by the ungodly, *Act.* 8. 19. He being *the brightneſs of Gods Glory, and the expreſs Image of his Perſon, and upholding all things by the Word of his Power, when he had by himſelf purged our ſinnes, he ſate down on the right hand of the Majeſty on high, being made ſo much better then the Angels, as he hath by Inheritance obtained a more excellent Name then they*, Heb. 1.3,4. As Chriſt therefore in his glorified Humanity united to the Godhead, is far more excellent then the Angels of God, and more glorious then the Sunne, ſo is the *Power* of God more abundantly demonſtrated in him, than in the Sunne, or the Angels, or any other Creature. The Illuminated do know this, *and what is the exceeding greatneſs of his Power, to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty Power, which he wrought in Chriſt*

Chriſt when he raiſed him from the dead, and ſet him at his own right hand in the Celeſtials, farre above all Principality and Power and Might and Dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this World, but alſo in that which is to come; and hath put all things under his feet, and given him to be Head over all things to the Church, which is his body, the fulneſs of him that filleth all in all, Epheſ. 1. 19. 20, 21, 22, 23.

Beſides this, even in the Works of Chriſt for his Church, his Calling, and Sanctifying, and Ruling, and Preſerving them, his ſubduing their Enemies, and raiſing them from the dead, and Glorifying them with himſelf, how glorious is the very *Power* of God by his Sonne, 2 *Theſ.* 1. 11. *Phil.* 3. 10. *Epheſ.* 3. 7, 20. 2 *Pet.* 1. 3, 16. 1 *Cor.* 4. 20. *Epheſ.* 6. 10. 1 *Cor.* 15. 43. 1 *Pet.* 1. 5. And therefore his Goſpel may well be called, *The Power of God to Salvation*, Rom. 1. 16. Which hath been the Inſtrument of his *Power* in doing ſuch wonderful works in the world. 1 *Cor.* 1. 18. & 2. 5. 2 *Cor.* 6. 7. 2. *Cor.* 13. 3, 4.

5. But the moſt ſweet, and conſpicuous End of our Redemption, was the Demon-

Demonſtration *of Gods Love and Mercy* to man-kind, and that he might *make known the Riches of his Glory on the veſſels of Mercy, prepared unto Glory*, Rom. 9. 23. Of all Gods Attributes there is none ſhineth more illuſtrouſly in the work of our Redemption than *Love and Mercy*. *Hereby perceive we the Love of God, becauſe he laid down his life for us*, 1 Joh. 3. 16. By the Creation, and Suſtentation of us we perceive the Love of God, but more abundantly by our Redemption. *In this was manifeſted the Love of God towards us, becauſe that God ſent his only begotten Sonne into the World, that we might live through him*, 1 Joh. 4. 9. O wonderfull Love which condeſcendeth to ſuch Rebels, and embraceth ſuch unworthy and polluted ſinners, and pityeth them even in their blood! Even after we had ſold our ſelves to Satan, and caſt away the Mercies of our Creation, and had all *come ſhort of the Glory of God*, and were ſentenced to death, and ready for the Execution; then did this wonderful Love ſtep in, and reſcue and recover us. Not ſtaying till we Repented and cryed for Mercy, and caſt our ſelves at his feet; but ſeeking us in the Wilderneſs,

and

and finding us before we felt that we were loſt, and being found of us before we ſought him, and beging to us in the depth of our Miſery. *Herein is Love, not that we Loved God, but that he Loved us, and ſent his Sonne to be the propitiation for our ſinnes*, 1 Joh. 4. 10. Though God Love us not in our ſinne and miſery, before our Converſion, ſo far as in that ſtate to Juſtifie us, and Adopt us, and take pleaſure in us, or have Communion with us in the Spirit, yet doth he ſo far Love us in that ſtate, as to Redeem us by the Blood of Chriſt, and tender us his Salvation, and to bring in his choſen effectually to entertain his offer. And thus *the Love of God is ſhed abroad in our hearts, by the Holy Ghoſt which is given to us; For when we were yet without ſtrength in due time Chriſt dyed for the ungodly: And God commended his Love towards us, in that while we were yet ſinners Chriſt dyed for us*, Rom. 5. 6, 8. *Greater Love hath no man then this, that a man lay down his life for his friends*, Joh. 15. 13. What was the Sonne of God, but *Love Incarnate*? *Love* borne of a Virgin? *Love* coming down from Heaven to Earth, and walking in fleſh among the miſerable, ſeeking

seeking and saving that which was lost: Was it not *Love* that spoke those words of life, those comfortable promises, those necessary precepts, those gracious encouragements, which the Gospel doth abound with? Was it not *Love* it self, that went preaching Salvation to the Sonnes of death, and deliverance to the Captives, and offered to bind up the broken hearts, *Luke* 4. 18? Was it not *Love* that invited the weary and heavy laden, *Matth.* 11. 28? And that sent even to *the high-waies, and the hedges to compel men to come in that his house might be filled*, Matth. 22. 9, 10. Luke 14. 23. Was it not *Love* it self that went up and down healing and doing good; that suffered them, for whom he suffered to scorn him, and spit upon him, and buffet him, and condemn him? that being *reviled, reviled not again*: *that gave his life, an offering for sinne*, and dyed, and prayed for them that murdered him? No wonder if the *Gospel* be it that teacheth us, to call God by the name of *Love* it self, 1 *Joh.* 4. 8 For it is the *Gospel* that hath most fully *revealed* him to be so. No wonder if the *Gospel* do so frequently, and importunatly require us to

Love

Love one another, and even to lay down your lives for Christ, and for one another, when it hath given us such a ground and motive, and president for our Love. He that seeth the true face of Redemption, and understandeth, and savoureth the *Gospel* and the Grace of Christ, must needs see most cogent Reasons for such dutyes, 1 *Joh.* 4. 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12. *Beloved, let us Love one another, for Love is of God: and every one that Loveth is born of God, and knoweth God: he that Loveth not knoweth not God; for God is Love. If God so Loved us, we ought also to Love one another.--- If we Love one another, God dwelleth in us,* --- So 1 *Joh.* 3. 10, 11, 14, 16, 17, 18. No wonder if by this *Love* we know that we are translated from death to life, and if by it the Children of God be known from the Children of the Devil, 1 *Joh* 3. 10, 11, 14. For *Love* is the very Nature and Image of our Father. No wonder if this be the *New Commandment*, which had newly such a powerfull motive, and president: And no wonder if it be the great distinguishing Caracter, by which all men shall *know* that we are the Disciples of Christ, *Joh.* 13. 35. When he had set us such a Copie,

Copie, and taught us this leſſon by ſuch effectual means; writing it out for us in lines of blood, even of his own moſt pretious Blood, and ſhedding it abroad in our hearts, by the Holy Ghoſt.

But if we ſhould come down, to the particular benefits of Chriſt's death, and ſee what Love is manifeſted in them, even in our Calling, our Juſtification our Adoption, or Sanctification, our Preſervation, and our everlaſting Glorification, we ſhould find our ſelves in an Ocean that hath neither banks nor bottom; and when we have fathomed as far as we can, we muſt be contented to ſtand and admire it, and to ſay with the Beloved Apoſtle, *Behold what manner of Love the Father hath beſtowed upon us, that we ſhould be called the Sons of God!* 1 Joh. 3. 1.

And this is the bleſſed imployment of the Saints, which they are called to by the *Goſpel*, to live in the participation, and conſideration and admiration of this wonderous Love, *that Chriſt may dwell in their hearts by Faith, and ſo being rooted and grounded in Love, they may be able to comprehend with all Saints what is the bredth, and length, and depth, and height*

height, and to know the Love of Christ, which passeth knowledg, and be filled with all the fullness of God, Ephes. 3. 17, 18, 19. *And withall, to be followers of God as dear Children, and walk in Love as Christ hath Loved us, and given himself for us, an Offering, and a Sacrifice to God, for a sweet smelling savour*, Ephes. 5. 1, 2. *And to love without dissimulation*, Rom. 12. 9, 10. *Even from a pure heart fervently*, 1 Pet. 1. 22. *That we love as brethren, being compassionate, pittifull, and courteous; not rendring evill for evill, but contrariwise blessing; knowing that we are thereunto called, that that we should inherit a blessing*, 1 Pet. 3. 8, 9 *And that we keep our selves in the Love of God*, Jud. 21. *that nothing may be able to seperate us from it*, Rom. 8. 35, 36, 37. And if we thus imitate our Heavenly pattern, *the God of Love and Peace will be with us*, 2 Cor. 13. 11. And thus I have shewed you the principall Ends of the undertaking of Christ in the work of our Redemption, especially as they are attained directly by his Cross, and Resurrection.

6. Another End also is apparent in the Scripture; which is *the Glorifying*

of Gods Rewarding Justice, together with his Mercy in the Salvation of his Elect. This End he hath partly attaineth *here* (for God hath his Ends continually:) In this life his Servants have much of his Mercy; and the beginnings of their Reward in the beginning of their Salvation; But the fullnes is hereafter in their Glorification. All his promises he performeth in their seasons. Even in the present pardon of our sinnes he honoureth his Faithfullnes and Justice, 1 *Joh.* 1. 9. His Faithfullnes in making good his promise, and his Justice in Rewarding the performers of the condition, and giving what his promise had made their due: that so men may even here in part discern between the *Righteous* and the *Wicked*, between him that *serveth God, and him that serveth him not; While they see God esteem of his people as his jewels, and spare them as a man spareth his sonne that serveth him* Mal. 3. 17, 18. *The King of Zion is just, having Salvation,* Zach. 9. 9. *The Righteousnes of God is manifested* in our Justification, *Rom.* 3. 21, 22. *Even the Righteousnes of God, which is by Faith of Jesus Christ unto all, and upon all them that believe; for there is no difference*

rence: *For all have sinned and come short of the Glory of God; being Justified freely by his grace, through the Redemption that is in Jesus Christ, whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation, through Faith in his Blood, to declare his Righteousness: for the remission of sinnes that are past, through the forbearance of God: to declare, I say, at this time his Righteousness; that he might be Just, and the Justifier of him that believeth in Jesus*, Rom. 3. 25, 26.

But it is most eminently at Judgment, and in the world to come, that this Remunerative Justice with Mercy will be Glorified: *When Christ shall come* (purposely) *to be glorified in his Saints, and to be admired in all them that believe* (not only in himself, but in them:) and that *because they were believers*, 2 Thes. 1. 10. When *we have fought the good fight, and finished our Course, and kept the Faith, we shall find that there is laid up for us a Crown of Righteousness, which the Lord the Righteous Judg shall give us, and all that love his appearing at that day*: 2 Tim. 4. 8. He will justifie and applaud them before all the world, yea and adjudge them to everlasting Life, with a

Well done, Good and Faithfull ſervant: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord; I will make thee Ruler over many things; even Becauſe they had been faithfull in a little, Luke 19. 17. Matth. 25. 21, 23. Becauſe they ſhewed their love to him in his members, he will ſay to them, *Come ye bleſſed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world,* Matth. 25. 34, 35, 36. He that now commandeth us to *ſay to the Righteous, It ſhall be well with him,* Iſa. 3. 10. Will in *Righteouſneſs Cauſe* it then to be *well with him. Then ſhall the Righteous ſhine forth as the Sunne in the Kingdom of their Father,* Matth. 13. 43 And the Righteouſneſs and Mercy of their Father ſhall as conſpicuouſly and glorioufly ſhine in them. For it is a day appointed for the *Revelation of the Righteous Judgment of God, who will render to every man according to his deeds,* Rom. 2. 5, 6. *The preſent Faith and Patience of the Saints in all the Perſecutions and Tribulations which they endure, is a manifeſt token of the Righteous Judgment of God, that they may be accounted worthy of the Kingdom of God, for which they ſuffer: It being a Righteous thing with God to Recompence*

compence Tribulation to them that trouble us, and to us that are troubled, Rest with the Saints, 2 Thes. 1. 5, 6, 7. For the Righteous Lord loveth Righteousness, Psal. 11. 7. and in Righteousness will he judge the world, Acts 17. 31. Rev. 19. 11. And therefore in the keeping of his Word there is great Reward, Psal. 19 11. Yea a cup of water given in Love to him, shall not be unrewarded, Matth. 10. 41, 42. To him that soweth Righteousness shall be a sure Reward, Prov. 11. 18. If in this life men are forst to say, Verily there is a Reward for the Righteous: Verily there is a God that judgeth in the Earth, Psal. 58. 11. Much more when we receive the Reward of the Inheritance, Col. 3. 24. This causeth the Saints to forsake the pleasures of sinne, becaus they have respect to the Recompence of Reward, Heb. 11. 26. This is it that maketh them Rejoyce and be exceeding glad in their Persecutions, because that great is their Reward in Heaven: and therefore it is that they Cast not away their confidence, because it hath great Recompence of Reward, Heb. 10. 25. If we let no man beguil us of our Reward, Col. 2. 18. And if we Look to our selves that we lose not those

things that we have wrought, we shall receive a full Reward, 2 Joh. 8. For the Lord hath said *Behold I come quickly, and my Reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be*, Rev. 22. 12.

7. Another End of Christ's undertaking in this blessed work, is, *The Complacency and Glory of God in the Love, and Praise, and Service of his Redeemed ones*; in some measure here; but in perfection when they are perfected. Sinne had made us unserviceable to God: And Christ bringeth us back into a fitness for his service: He disposeth us Godward by Faith and Love; and he hath *Redeemed us from our iniquity, and purifieth to himself a Peculiar People zealous of good works*, Tit. 2. 14. *To which he createth us, that we should walk in them*, Ephes. 2. 10. *And with such Sacrifice God is well-pleased*, Heb. 13. 16. Phil. 4. 18. *The blood of the Covenant* was therefore shed, *to make us perfect in every good work to do his will, who worketh in us that which is well-pleasing in his sight*, Heb. 13. 20, 21. And this must be our care, *to walk worthy of the Lord in all well-pleasing, being fruitfull in every good work*, Col. 1. 10.

And

And then whatsoever we ask, we shall receive of him, because we keep his Commandement, and do those things that are Pleasing in his sight, 1 Joh. 3. 22. see 1 Thes. 4. 1. Heb. 11. 6. Rom. 8. 8. 2 Tim. 2. 4. 1 Cor. 7. 32. Heb. 11. 5.

But principally when we are Glorified, and fitted by our perfection for the Perfect Love, and Promises of God, then will God perfectly take Pleasure in us, and in our Love and Praise. The Glory of the new *Jerusalem* and the Harmony of everlasting Praise and Thanksgiving will be his delight. *He will Rejoyce over us with Joy, he will Rest in his Love; he will joy over us with singing*, Zeph. 3. 17.

8. Another End of Christ's undertaking this blessed work, is *the Everlasting Glory of God which shall shine forth in the Glorified Manhood of the Redeemer, and the everlasting complacency that God will have in him, for his own perfection, and the work that he hath wrought.*

Though Christ had no need to suffer for any sinne or want of his own; yet was it his personal dignity, dominion, and Everlasting Glory, as well as our Salvation, that was intended by him, and

by the Father in this work, and which he was to receive as the *Reward* of his performances, *Rom.* 14. 7. *Phil.* 2. 8, 9, 10. *Matth.* 28. 18, 19 *Heb.* 1. 3, 4, 6. *Epheſ.* 12. 22. Nay if we may make compariſons, this ſeemeth the higheſt part of Gods End, in the ſending of his Sonne. As there is no part of all the Works of God, to be compared to the *Perſon* of the *Redeemer*, ſo conſequently there is none in which the Glory of God will ſhine forth ſo admirably, and illuſtriouſly as in Chriſt. If on Earth the Heavenly voice bare witneſs that it was *in him that the Father was well-pleaſed*, Matth. 3. 17. & 17. 5. & 12. 18. Which was uttered both at his Baptiſm, and his Transfiguration, when his Diſciples ſaw a glympſe of his glory, and he was the *choſen Servant of God in whom his Soul delighted*, Iſa. 42. 1. Much more is it apparent, that in his Heaveny Glory he will be the Fathers Everlaſting Pleaſure and delight: and in him, and by him, and for the work that he hath wrought, the Redeemed in glory will honour him for ever, Rev. 5. 9. *He is the Head of the body, the Church: the beginning, the firſt-born from the dead,*

that

that in all things he might have the preheminence: For it Pleaſed the Father, that in him ſhould all fullneſs dwell, Col. 1. 17, 18, 19. And therefore in him the Glory of God will ſhine in fullneſs, and he ſhall have the preheminence in the Fathers Everlaſting Love. When Chriſt prayed, *Joh.* 12. 28. *Father Glorifie thy Name*: He was anſwered by a Voice from Heaven, *I have Glorified it, and will Glorifie it again.* Even in the Sonne that thus deſired it. He hath done it on Earth, and he will do it again more perfectly in Heaven. *He hath glorified the Sonne, that the Sonne alſo may glorifie him*, Joh. 17. 1. As he *glorified his Father on Earth, and finiſhed the work which he gave him to do*, ſo the Father hath now *glorified him with himſelf*, that in his Glory he may be yet more glorified, *Joh.* 17. 4, 5, 6 In his Transfiguration his *Face* did ſhine as the Sunne. *Joh.* 17. 2. And in his appearance to *Paul*, his ſhining light did caſt him *blindfold* and *trembling* on the Earth, *Acts* 9. 4, 6. It was *Stephen's* encouragment to the *ſuffering* of his Martyrdom, to ſee the *Glory of God* and *Jeſus* ſtanding on Gods right-hand, *Acts* 7. 55, 56. When *John* ſaw him on the

the Lords Day in the ſpirit, he beheld *his eyes as a flame of fire, and his feet like burning braſs, in the furnace, and his voice was as the ſound of many waters, and in his right hand were the ſtarres, and out of his mouth went a ſharp two-edged ſword, and his countenance was as the Sunne that ſhineth in his ſtrength*, Rev. 1. 14, 15, 16. His voice alſo did proclaim his Glory, *I am the firſt and the laſt. I am he that liveth and was dead; and behold I am alive for evermore, Amen, and have the keys of Hell and of death*, verſ. 17, 18. It was the *Lord of Glory* that was crucified, 1 *Cor.* 2. 8. *God was manifeſt in the fleſh, juſtified in the Spirit, ſeen of Angels, preached to the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into Glory*, 1 Tim. 3. 16. Where he is *Glorified* with the Father in the praiſes of the Saints, *Rev.* 5. 12, 13. The Glory in the Holy Mount was great at the giving of the Law: But it was no Glory to that of the Goſpel adminiſtration, 2 *Cor.* 3. 7, 10 Much more, to that purpoſe of the Glorified Redeemer who hath *overcome*, and is ſet down with the Father in his throne, *Rev.* 3. 21. Yea the Glory that will be given to God for ever will be through Jeſus Chriſt, *Rom.* 16, 17.

And

And indeed, it is a very great Question whether we shall immediately see the Essence of God in Heaven, or only see him in the glorified Redeemer, and whether Christ will not then be the *Mediator of our Fruition*, as he was here the *Mediator of Acquisition*. But certain we are, that God will be everlastingly pleased and glorified in the Person of the Redeemer, as well as in the Church, which is his body.

9. And *reductively* it may be said to be Gods End in this blessed work, that he may *more fully demonstrate his Vindictive Justice, according to the Gospel, or Law of the Redeemer, upon them that finally reject his grace*, then it would have been manifested on the terms of the Law of Creation, on *Adam* and his off-spring. Though Christ *came not into the world*, (primarily) *to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved*, yet was it his purpose, that unbelievers that *love darkness rather then light, should* fall under the special condemnation, *Joh.* 3. 18, 19. And that they should not *see life, but the Wrath of God should abide upon them*, vers. 36. God would not so much as permit them to reject his Salvation,

Salvation, but that he knows how he may be no loſer by them: *He ſuffereth with much patience the veſſels of wrath, to make his Wrath and Power known*, Rom. 9.22. The mouths of the condemned will be utterly ſtopped, and they will be left ſpeechles, when they are judged on terms of Grace, much more then they would have been if they had been judged only by the firſt Law: When they ſee Chriſt and Heaven, that was offered them, and remember their wilfull and obſtinate contempt of them, their own Conſciences and tongues ſhall juſtifie God, and confeſs that he is Righteous in the dreadfuleſt of his Judgments. *If the word ſpoken by Angels was ſtedfaſt, and every tranſgreſſion and diſobedience received a juſt recompence of reward, How ſhall they eſcape that neglect of great Salvation, which at firſt began to be ſpoken by the Lord, and then was confirmed by them that heard him, God alſo bearing them witneſs with ſigns and wonders, and with divers Miracles and gifts of the Holy Ghoſt*, Heb. 2. 3, 4. And *if they eſcaped not, that refuſed him that ſpake on Earth, much more ſhall not they eſcape that turn away from him that ſpeaketh from Heaven? For our*

God

God is a conſuming fire, Heb. 12. 25, 29. So much of the Ends of Chriſt's undertaking in our Redemption.

In which you may ſee that there are divers things which Demonſtrate the Glory of the forementioned Attributes of God, in this Goſpel Diſpenſation. 1. It ſhineth forth in the Perſon of the Redeemer as he was on Earth, in his Nature and wonderfull conception, and his perfections. 2. And it alſo ſhineth forth in the Actions of his life, overcoming the world, and the Devil, and perfectly fullfilling the Law of God: So that the Image of his Father, did ſhine forth in his Converſation. 3. And alſo in his Death and Sufferings was the Father glorified, as I ſhewed before. 4. And alſo in the moſt Wiſe and Holy frame of thoſe Laws, by which the grace of the Mediator is conveyed, and the Church governed. 5. And by the Image of God, by the impreſs of thoſe Laws on the Souls of his Saints, and by the holineſs of their lives, the Glory of God is alſo demonſtrated. 6. As alſo by the Juſtifying ſentence of the Judge, and the glorious Reward beſtowed on the Faithfull. 7. And by the Condemning ſentence

tence and execution on the ungodly, in whom Vindictive Justice will be honoured. 8. And in the perfection of the Individual Saints, and their perfect Love and Praise. 9. And in the Saints as imbodyed in the Heavenly *Jerusalem*, the Glory of which will be the Glory of God. 10. And pricipally in the Blessed Person and Work of the Redeemer. In all these will Gods Glory shine forth for ever.

Quest. *But to whom is it that God doth thus Demonstrate his Glory?*

Answ. 1. To the Saints in this life, in that degree as is suited to a state of Grace, and the condition of a travailer that lives by Faith. We are apt to look upward, and long after fuller revelations of the Heavenly Kingdom and mystery, and marvail that God will not shew himself more fully to his Saints on Earth. Fain we would know more of God, and Christ, and the life to come, and it is oft matter of some temptation to us, that God doth not satisfie these desires, but leaveth them in so much darkness, that are willing of his light. But this is, because we do not consider how much of Glory consisteth in the light: and that Grace is more

more in the Diſires of it then in the poſſeſſion: and if we ſhould have as much of it as we deſire, it were but to bring down Heaven to Earth. Means muſt be ſuited to their ends. God will diſcover to us ſo much of his Glory, as may quicken our deſires, and keep alive our hope, and patience, and endeavours; but not ſo much as ſhall ſatisfie us, and anſwer our expectations. For Heaven is not here. We muſt not carry our Home about with us, but travail towards it, that we may reach it at the laſt.

2. God doth even now Demonſtrate the Glory of his forementioned Attributes, in the work of Redemption, not only to his Saints, but to the Angels of Heaven. The conſideration of this hath often ſatisfied me, when I have been tempted to wonder at the work of Redemption, that God ſhould ſo far condeſcend as to be incarnate, and make ſuch glorious diſcoveries of himſelf, and yet that ſo few in the world ſhould take notice of it, and he ſhould have from men ſo little of the honour, that he ſeemeth by his preparations to expect. But the moſt part of the world did never once ſee the Glory that ſhineth to them in the Redeemer.

Redeemer. But God hath another world beſides this, and other Creatures beſides man, in all likelyhood incomparably more numerous (perhaps thouſands for one) and certainly more excellent. And though Chriſt did aſſume the Nature of Angels, and came not to Redeem them that needed no Redeemer, yet may the luſtre of this work of Redemption appear to the Angels more clearly then to man; and God may have a thouſand-fold more Glory from them that are but the ſpectators and admirers, then from us in our preſent darkneſs, that are yet poſſeſſors. As we that are here on Earth, do look upon and admire the Glory of the Sunne, which is as it were in another world, and out of our reach; ſo the Angels much more may gaze upon the Glory of the Sonne of God, and admire the Lord in the work of our Redemption, though they were not the Redeemed ones. So that unto *them* doth God ſhine forth by it in his excellencies.

Perhaps you'l ſay, *that cannot be: becauſe this is but ſeeing him in a glaſs; when the Angels ſee him face to face, and immediately behold his bleſſed Eſſence: or elſe how can the Saints expect that beatifical*

ſicall Viſion. To which I anſwer Firſt, that I am uncertain whether ſeeing face to face bean immediate intuition of the Eſſence of God, or only ſuch a ſight of his Glory in thoſe emanations, that are as appropriated to the place or ſtate of Bliſs. Gods Eſſence is every where; but that Glory is not every where: And ſo I know not whether our preſent knowledg be not called *Enigmaticall, and as in a glaſs*, comparatively to that Glory prepared for the Saints: But ſecondly, I anſwer, that certain I am that God is Demonſtrated to his Angels in the Redeemer, yea in the Church it ſelf, which is the Subject of his Grace, and that they are both Affected, and Imployed about us accordingly. He that *ſpoiled Principalities, and Powers, and openly triumphed over them, and by death, overcame him that had the power of death*, Col. 2. 15. Heb. 2. 14. And had ſo much to do againſt the evill Angels as Enemies, no doubt is joyfully obſerved by the good Angels. And he that is ſet ſo *far above Principalities, and Powers, and Might, and Dominion, and every name that is named in this world, or that which is to come*, Epheſ. 1. 21. And is *gone into*

Heaven, and is on the right hand of God, Angels, and Authorities, and Powers, being made subject to him, (1 Pet. 3. 22.) *no doubt* is honoured and admired by Angels. And indeed it is expresly said, *Let all the Angels of God worship him*, Heb. 1. 6. And what are *they all but Ministring spirits, sent forth to Minister for them, who shall be heirs of Salvation*, Heb. 1. 14. And therefore sent forth by Jesus Christ, the Lord of Saints. Which makes some think that the title of Angels, was never given to any of these Spirits, till the Mediators undertaking, and that it was only as they were his deputed messengers, or servants for the Ends of that undertaking. Sure we are, they attended his birth with their acclamations, and his life and sufferings (as far as was meet) with their service; and that they are deputed to bear his servants in their hands, that they *dash* not their foot against a stone; that they are ascending, and descending, and are present with the Churches in their Holy Worship; and that they rejoyce at the *Conversion* of one sinner; and that the *least* of Christ's servants, have their Angels beholding the *face* of God: and that the Law was given by

by their disposition or ordination; and they attend the departing Souls of Believers; and that they contend against evill spirits for our good, and are encamped about us, and that they shall attend the Lord at his coming to Judgment, and be his glorious retinue, and Instruments in the work; and that they are numbred with us, as members of the same Heavenly *Jerusalem*, and that we shall be like or equall to them, *Luke* 2. 14, 15. *Marke* 4. 11. *Luke* 22. 43. *Acts* 10. 6, 7, 22. *Psal.* 34. 7. & 91. 11. *Matth.* 13. 39, 41. & 16. 27. & 24. 31. & 25. 31. & 26. 53. *Luke* 16. 22. *Matth.* 18. 10. 2 *Thes.* 1. 7. *Luke* 20. 36. *Marke* 12. 25. *Acts* 7. 65. *Gal.* 3. 19. *Heb.* 12. 22. 2 *Pet.* 2. 11. *Luke* 15. 10. *Joh.* 1. 51. Yea men must be either confessed or denied, owned or disowned, before the Angels, *Luke* 12. 8, 9. See *Rev.* 19. 18. *Rev.* 3. 5. But if all this seem not sufficient to perswade you that the Angels are so far interessed in the affaires of God about the Redeemed, as to behold and admire him in this blessed work, take notice of the expres affirmations of the Scriptures, 1 *Pet.* 1. 12. *Which things the Angels desire to look into.*

And why but to see and admire the Wisdom, and Power, and Goodness, and Mercy, and Justice of God, shining forth in the Redeemer? If this be not plain enough, mark well those words, *Ephes.* 3. 10. *To the intent that now unto the Principalities, and Powers in Heavenly places, might be known by the Church, the manifold Wisdom of God.* You see here that the Church of the Redeemed, is that admirable looking glass, which God hath set up to this very intent, that his Angels may in it, or by it, behold the manifold Wisdom of God: Yea and that upon the full revelation of Christ by the Gospel, they saw that which did more fully inform, and illuminate them. No doubt but the very work of Creation, yea of this inferior world, that are made for the habitation, and use of man, are far better known to Angels then to man: for we know but little of what we daily see and use: And consequently it is by Angels more then by men, that God is beheld, admired, and glorified in them. And if it be so in these works of Creation, we may well say, it is so in the works of Redemption.

3. But when we are perfected in Glory,

Glory, then *we our ſelves* ſhall clearly ſee the Glory of this Myſtery, and of God therein. As it is not till we come to Heaven, that we ſhall have the fulleſt *benefits* of Redemption, ſo it is not till then, that we ſhall have the fulleſt *underſtanding* of it, and God have his fulleſt praiſes for it. As we are here but ſowing the ſeed of our own Glory, which we muſt reap in the everlaſting fruition of God; ſo God is here but ſowing thoſe ſeeds of his Praiſe, and Glory, which he will eternally reap by this bleſſed work. Do not therefore judg of the ends, and fruits of Chriſt's undertakings, by what you ſee him attain on Earth, but by what he ſhall attain in Heaven, when he hath fully ſeen the travail of his Soul, to his ſatisfaction, and hath preſented the whole Church without ſpot unto God, and when the glorious manage of the Lamb, with the Heavenly *Jeruſalem* is ſolemnized, and the Kingdom delivered up to the Father, *Iſa.* 53. 11. *Epheſ.* 5. 27. *Rev.* 19. 7. 1 *Cor.* 15. 24. It will be another manner of *conceiving* which we ſhall have in Heaven of this bleſſed work, when we ſee the face of our Glorified Lord, and fully poſſeſs the fruits of

his Redemption, then this is that we have now by our weak believing. We shall then have another manner of sight of the Wisdom, and Power, and Love, and Justice that appear to man, in the face of Christ, then now we have.

4. Yea the tormenting discoveries of the Glory of Redemption to the condemned rejecters of it, shall also contribute to the Glory of God.

You see then that this work hath most Glorious Ends; which I have mentioned the more largely, both to *remove their temptations* that are apt to think, that it *was an unnecessary thing*, and therefore the less regardable, and *to teach men the true value of it, by shewing them the true Ends.*

For the *former*, I say, There was no necessity that God should make the world, and reveale his Power, and Wisdom, and Goodness, in this excellent frame, but what did suppose the free Will of God, the Original Cause. Will you therefore say, that the Creation is vaine; and undervalue Gods admirable works in which he thus revealeth himself to the intellectuall Creatures? So here; we confess that there could be no neces-

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sity of Redemption, but what was Originally derived from the Will of God, (though a necessity *ad finem* there was, from the constitution of things, upon supposition of what went before the undertaking.) But yet shall we undervalue so glorious a work, in which the Divine perfections do so fully reveale themselves to the world?

And I say the more of this, because I do observe that its the not apprehending the high and excellent Ends of Redemption, that makes it so much slighted, and consequently tempteth many to *infidelity*. For the Ends and Uses do set the value on the means. That is of little worth, that is to little purpose, and doth but little good. If men understood more the Ends of Redemption, and how much of God doth shine forth in the world, in the Person, and Life, and Laws, and Works of the Sonne of God, they would then live in the admiration of it, and be alwaies searching, and prying into it, and desire to know nothing but God in Christ Crucified, and account all things else but as loss and dung for this excellent knowledg: But alas, the most do scarce discern any higher Ends of

Christ, or other use of him, then to save themselves from Hell, and for want of Faith, and through Humiliation, they have but little sense of that: And therefore no wonder if the Redeemer be neglected, and God denied the honour of the work.

So much of this second point, the Reasons, and Ends of Christ's undertaking. I shall purposely be shorter on the rest.

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3. The third point to be understood concerning our Redeemer, is, *What he hath done and suffered for mankind, and Wherein his Redeeming Work consisted both as to the General and the special part.* Should I stand on these at large, I must needs be voluminous; and therefore I shall but briefly reciet them for your remembrance.

1. The first thing that Christ did for the saving of the world, was his Interposing between offending man, and the wrath of God; and so preserving the world from that destruction, which the execution of the violated Law would have procured: Undertaking then to become the Seed of the woman, and so to break the

the Serpents head: and revealing this Grace by slow degrees, till the time of his coming.

And then when the fullness of time was come, he was made man, being conceived by the Holy Ghost, and born of the Virgin *Mary*, and so the *Word was made flesh, and dwelt among men, who beheld his Glory, as the Glory of the only begotten of the Father, full of Grace, and Truth*, Joh. 1. 14. Thus God was *manifested* to men in the flesh. 1 *Tim.* 3. 16.

3. And as he was perfectly Holy in his Nature without any stain or guilt of Original sinne; so was he perfectly Holy in his Life, and never broke the least Command of God in thought, word, or deed. Never could any *convince* him of sinne, *Joh.* 8. 46. He fulfilled the Law of Nature, which all the world was under, and the Mosaical Law which the *Jews* were under, and the special Law that was given to himself as Mediator, and was common to no other Creature in the world.

And thus he performed these excellent works. 1. By the fullfilling of all Righteousness he pleased the Father, alwaies accom-

accomplishing his Will; and so did much of the work of a Saviour in Meriting for us. *Matth.* 3. 15. & 5. 17. *Joh.* 8. 29. *Matth* 12. 18. & 17. 5. *Rom.* 5. 19. *For such an High-priest became us, who is Holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners*, Heb. 7. 26.

2. He hath conquered the Tempter, that conquered us. And therefore did he purposely yield himself to such sore temptations, *Matth.* 4. That his Victory might be glorious, and the Second *Adam* might overcome him that had overcome the first. And thus he hath done much to the rescue of the Captivated.

3. Hereby also he hath overcome the world, which overcame the first *Adam*, and his posterity: He trampled upon its seeming glory; he neglected and despised its baits and allurements; he went through all its cruel persecutions, and oppositions: So that the world now as well as the Devil, are conquered things. By which he hath made way for the Victory of his followers, and given them ground of great encouragment, *Joh.* 16. 33. *Be of good cheer: I have overcome the world.* Yea I may say in a sort he hath overcome

overcome the flesh also. For though Christ had no *corrupt flesh* as we have to contend with, yet had he a natural and sensitive appetite, which the Command of God did forbid him to fulfill. And therefore when innocent Nature dissired that the Cup might pass from him, and abhor death by a simple *Aversness*; yet perfect Holiness permitted not this to proceed to a *Refusal* by the comparing *Intellect, and Choosing, or Refusing Will*; but saith, *Not my will, but thine be done.* And when Christ was hungry and weary, the desire of food and rest, by the sensitive appetite, was no sinne: But when the Work of God forbad the fullfilling of such desires, he still denyed them.

4. Hereby also he hath set us a *perfect copy and patern* of obedience, and is become our Example whom we must endeavour to imitate. For he knew that it is the most effectual teaching, to do it by words and deeds together. It is a great help to us, when we do not only heare his voice, but see also which way he hath gone before us. When he saith, *Learn of me*, he directs us, not only to his words, but to himself, who was

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meeke and *lowly*, Matth. 11. 28.

5. Moreover Christ received of the Father fullnes of the Spirit, and Power, for the benefit of the Redeemed: that he might be meet to be the Head, and the Treasury of the Church, and to shower down the streams of Grace upon his Members; and when all Power was given him in Heaven, and Earth, he might be fitted to the following application of his benefits, and to rule, and support, and defend his people.

6. Moreover he was pleased himself to become a Preacher of the Gospel of Salvation; not to all the world, but principally as a Minister of the *Circumcision*, that is, the Jews, *Rom.* 15. 8. He that purchased Salvation, condescended also to proclaime it. The preaching of the Gospel, is a work that Christ thought not himself too good for, Sometimes to many, sometimes to one or two as he had opportunity; often with tears; and alwaies with earnestnes and compassion, did he go about doing good, and seeking the *lost*, and healing the *diseased*, and calling men to Faith, and Repentance, and offering them the Grace, and Life which he purchased.

7. And

7. And he was pleased also to seale up his Doctrine by his Works, casting out Devils, healing all diseases, raising the the dead, and working divers other Miracles, to assure them that he came from *God*, and did *his* Work, and revealed *his* Will, that so the world might have no excuse for their unbelife; but that they that would not *believe* upon any other account, might yet *believe* him for the sake of his works, *Joh.* 3. 2. *Acts* 2. 22. *Heb.* 2. 4. *Joh.* 5. 36. & 10. 25 38. & 14. 11, 12. & 15. 24.

8. Besides all this, he gave up himself, to a life of suffering, being despised by his Creatures whom he came to Redeeme, and destitute voluntarily of fleshly pleasures, and of that riches, and worldly provision, that might procure it: He was a man of sorrows, afflicted from his youth; persecuted from the Cradle; he gave his Cheeks to the smiters, and his Person to be made the scorn of fools: He was crowned with thornes, spit upon, and buffited, and having sweat water, and blood, in his Agonie in the garden, he was hanged on a Cross, where thieves were both his companions, and revilers, where they gave him gall, and

and vineger to drink, pierced his blessed Body with a spear, and put him to a shamfull cursed death. But he endured the Cross, despising the shame, and gave up himself thus a Sacrifice for sinne; and bore our transgressions, that we might be *healed* by his stripes; and having *ransomed* us by his Blood, he was buried as an offender, continuing for a time in the Power of the grave, *Isa.* 53. throughout, *Matth.* 26. & 27. *Heb.* 12. 2. All this he consented to undergo (though he consented not to the sinne of them that did inflict it). For he laid down his *Life*, it was not taken from him against his Will, *Joh.* 10. 17, 18.

9. Having thus paid the price of our Reconciliation to God, the third day he Rose again from the dead: Though Soldiours watcht his grave, because he had *foretold* them that he would rise the third day, yet were they soon daunted by the glory of an Angel, that came and roled away the stone. And so Christ made known his Divine Power, and Victory, and the finishing of his work: And as by death he overcame him that had the power of death, that is, the Devil, *Heb.* 3, 14. So by his Resurrection he

he triumphed over death it ſelf. For how ſhould the grave detain the innocent, and death overcome the Lord of Life? This was the glorious day of triumph: In remembrance of this, he appointed the Lords Day to be obſerved by the Church. The Reſurrection of Chriſt, was the confuſion of all the powers of darkneſs; the great Argument to confirm the truth of his Doctrine, and prove his Godhead to the unbelieving world.

10. Being riſen, he more fully revealed his Goſpel, and ſent forth his Apoſtles and Diſciples, to proclaim the offers of Life to the world, and ſettle the Churches in a Holy order, when they had gathred them, and to ordaine ſuch Miniſters to ſucceed them, as might carry on his *work* to the end of the world, *Matth.* 28. 19, 20. And thus he is the faithfull Law-giver to the Church.

11. When he had abode thus forty daies on Earth, he aſcended up into Heaven while his Diſciples ſtood by, and gazed after him, *Acts* 1. 9, 10. And there hath taken poſſeſſion in our Nature, advancing it to the Fathers right hand in Glory, which was by ſinne depreſt ſo low in miſery. And ſo he is gone to *pre-*

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pare a place for us, leaving us a certain word of promiſe that *he will come again, and take us to himſelf, that where he is there we may be alſo*, Joh. 14. 2, 3. And as *our life now is hid there with Chriſt in God, ſo when he ſhall appear, we ſhall appear with him in glory*, Col. 3. 3, 4.

12. Being aſcended, he manifeſted his Power and his Truth in ſending down the Holy Ghoſt upon his Diſciples, enabling them to do ſuch works as he had done, and ſuch as were neceſſary to convince the unbelieving world, and to conquer the oppoſing wiſdom and power of the fleſh: Enabling them to ſpeak in variety of Languages, which they had never before learnt; as alſo to underſtand, and powerfully preach the myſteries of the Goſpel, to confirm their Doctrine by Miracles, healing the lame, the blind, the ſick, caſting out Devils, raiſing the dead, and conquering the reſiſtance of Principalities, and Powers, in ſeeming weakneſs, and in a contemptible garbe. Not to ſpeak now of the Sanctifying Work of the ſame Spirit, on them, and on the reſt of the Church.

13. Laſtly in this Glory Chriſt Intercedeth for us, and is our High-prieſt in the

the Heavens with God, living for ever, procuring and conveying to us the Mercies which we need upon the account of his Sacrifice: Ruling his Church, and preserving them; succeeding his Cause, and Servants; restraining and subduing his Enemies and ours; and will perfect his work at the day of his Coming to Judgment. So much of the works of Christ.

4. The fourth point to be understood concerning our Redemption, is, *The Nature and worth of the Benefits that are procured for us.* Which though you may gather much from what is said, and the full handling of them, would be a larger work, then is suitable to my present Ends, yet such a brief recital I shall here give you, as my Ends require.

In General, we have All from Jesus the Mediator that is worth the having; even all the blessings of this present life, and of the life to come. As we lost our Right to all by sinne, so we have our restored Right by Christ alone, who came to destroy sinne, and its effects. Had not he interposed, we might have had materially life, and natural faculties,

and other things which now are Mercies, but not *as Mercies*, but as the requisites to our deserved punishment: Even as the Devils have their Being, and natural perfections to sustain them in their sufferings. Nature it self, so far as Good, and all Natural blessings, are now of Grace: And that not only of such Grace as they were to *Adam*, which was *Mercy without proper Merit*: but of Gospel Grace procured by Christ; which is *Mercy contrary to Merit*. It is no sounder Doctrine to say, that God doth without the Merit of his Sonne bestow our common forfeited Mercies, either on the Elect, or others, then that he giveth us his Saving grace without it. As all things are delivered into the hands of Christ, *Joh.* 13. 3. So none can receive any good but from his hands. To give Mercies to men that forfeit them, and descern misery, is *so far* to pardon their sinne; for to remit the sinne, is to remit the punishment: But the Scripture is not acquainted with any pardon of sinne, but what is on the account of the Merits of Christ. They that deny this Mercy of God, in giving even to the ungodly such a measure of forgiveness, do speak against

against the daily, and hourly experience of all the world; and therefore need no other confutation.

More particularly. 1. Christ having taken the Humane Nature into Union with the Divine, our nature is thereby unconceivably advanced, and brought nigh to God.

2. Having fulfilled the Law, and offered himself a Sacrifice for sinne, Gods Justice, and Wisdom, and Holiness, and Goodness, is admirably Demonstrated: And this *Sacrifice* is both Satisfactory, and meritorious, on our behalf, *Heb.* 1. 3. 2 *Cor.* 5. 19. *Heb.* 9. 26. and 10 12.

3. The world, and the Devil, and Death, and the Grave, are conquered by him; in preparation to our conquest.

4. The Lord Jesus himself being risen, and Justified, hath received all *Power* in Heaven and Earth, *Mat.* 28. 19. and is enabled to do all things that are necessary for his further ends. As the Redeemer he is become Lord of our selves, and of all we have; and he is made the Soveraigne Ruler of all, having full Power to relax the Law that cursed us, and to deal

with the world on terms of Grace.

5. Accordingly he hath kept off the ſtroke of the rigorus Juſtice of God, and hindered the ſtrict execution of the Law of works, and giveth ſtill abundance of forfeited Mercies to the ſinfull world, keeping them from deſerved torments, while he is treating with them on terms of life.

6. He hath made an Univerſal deed of gift, of Chriſt, and Life to all the world, on Condition that they will but *Accept* the offer, 1 *Joh.* 5. 10, 11, 12. *Joh.* 1. 11, 12. & 3. 16, 17, 18, 19. In this Teſtament or Promiſe or Act of Oblivion, the ſinnes of all the world are conditionally pardoned, and they are conditionally Juſtified, and Reconciled to God.

7. He hath given Apoſtles, Evangeliſts, Paſtors, and Teachers, to proclaim this Act of Grace to the world, commanding them to go into All the world, and preach this Goſpel to *every Creature*, and promiſe Salvation to all that by Faith will become his true Diſciples, *Marke* 16. 16. *Matth.* 28. 20, 22. So that their commiſſion alſo for the promulgation is univerſal.

8. Though

8. Though his servants have most lamentably neglected their duty, and have not gone abroad the world, to divulge the Gospel according to his Will; imagining that this work had been proper to Apostles; and though the Nations have sinfully neglected a due enquirie after this blessed Light, yet hath he not left himself among them without witness, but hath given them some dawnings of the day, or some moon-light in the reflections of Evangelical Truth, who have not seen the Sunne it self: Much Mercy they have had, notwithstanding their transgressions; and while they served Devils, they have been provided for by God, *in whom they live, and move, and be: doing them good, and giving them raine from Heaven, and fruitfull seasons, filling their hearts with food and gladness; and this to teach them, that they should seek the Lord, if happily they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not farre from every one of them,* Acts 14. 17. & 17. 27, 28. *And that which may be known of God, is manifest among them, for God hath shewed it to them; for the invisible things of him from the Creation of the world are clearly seen, being under-*

shall by the things that are made, even his eternal Power, and Godhead; so that they are without excuse, Rom. 1. 19, 20. By experience they may find, that God dealeth not now in rigor of Justice, but on terms of Grace, and that sinne is not now unpardonable: and they should know that the *Goodness of God leadeth them to repentance*, Rom. 2. 4.

9. As the Gospel conditionally pardoneth all their sinnes, and offereth them Everlasting life, so it conteineth the clearest Reasons, and most effectual motives, to perswade them to Accept the offer. It affordeth them most excellent precepts, and instructions, and exhortations, and other helps to bring them to a willingness, that Salvation may be theirs.

10. To which also is added abundance of outward providential helpes, to further the working of the Gospel; as seasonable afflictions, and Mercies of divers sorts.

11. And with these is usually concurrent some inward motions, and assistance of the Holy Ghost; as knocking at the doore, where he is not yet let in, and entertained.

12. And

12. And by their presence in the visible Church, even the ungodly have many benefits in the Ordinances, and instructions, and examples of the Saints. All these (besides a Resurrection) are common effects of General Redemption, and not appropriated to the Elect.

Besides which there are others that the Elect only do receive. As 1. God is pleased by effectual Grace, to draw them to his Sonne, and make the Gospel successfull to their Conversion, insuperably teaching, and charging them by his Spirit, and causing them to Repent, and believe in Christ, and to perform the Conditions of his forementioned Promises. That Love that brought the Lord on Earth, that cloatheth him with flesh, that lifted him up upon the Cross, doth stream forth in his season into the hearts of his Elect, and toucheth them with a changing Power, and winneth them to his Father, and himself, and droppeth into them those Heavenly Principles, which will grow up in them to Everlasting Life.

2. Hereupon the Soul believing in Christ is United to him, as a Member of his Body, even of his true Catholik

Church; and Chriſt is become the Head, the Husband, the Lord, the Saviour of that Soul in a ſpecial ſort. Chriſt *himſelf* is *firſt* given to us in theſe *Relations*; and *from* him as our *Head*, his following benefits are conveyed. *He that hath the Sonne hath life, and he that hath not the Sonne hath not life*; for *this Life is in the Sonne*, 1 Joh. 5. 11, 12. He is the *Vine, and we are the Branches*, and out *of him we can do nothing*, Joh. 15. 1, 2, 5. As it was not we that *purchaſed* our own Salvation, ſo it is not we, but Chriſt that muſt have the keeping, and diſpenſing of the purchaſed benefits. For *it pleaſed the Father, that in him ſhould all fulneſs dwell, and that he ſhould be the Head over all things to his Church*, that it might by communication become his fulneſs, *Col.* 1. 19. *Eph.* 1. 22, 23. He is our Treaſury, and from him we muſt have our continual ſupplies: For *with him the Father will give us all things*, Rom. 8. 32. And thus Chriſt will *dwell in our hearts by Faith*, Epheſ. 3. 17. And ſet up the Kingdom of God within us.

3. Hereupon we have the pardon of all our ſinnes; not only as to the temporal

poral puniſhment, nor only as to the beſtowing of temporal Mercies, or common helps of Creatures, and Providences; for this is but a *winking at the daies of our ignorance* (Acts 17. 30.) in compariſon of the pardon, which afterward we receive Nor is it only a Conditonal, or Offered pardon; But it is an Actual Remiſſion of the *Eternal*, and of *all the deſtructive* Puniſhment. And thus we are Juſtified from all that might be charged on us from the Law, and accepted, and uſed as juſt by God. There is a kind of forgiveneſs that was promiſed to the Sacrificers, *Lev.* 4. 20, 26, 31, 35. & 5, 10, 13, 16, 18, & 6. 7. *Numb.* 15. 28. But as that was upon Chriſts account; ſo it extended not to the pardon of the Eternal Puniſhment to any but true Believers. He that was once Crucified, is *exalted by Gods right-hand, a Prince, and a Saviour, to give Repentance to Iſrael, and forgiveneſs of ſinnes*, Acts 5. 31. *Through this man is preached the forgiveneſs of ſinnes; and by him all that believe, are juſtified from all things, from which they could not be juſtified by the Law of Moſes*, Acts 13. 38, 39. When our eyes are open, and we *are turned from darkneſs to light, and from*

the power of Satan unto God, we then receive Remiſſion of our ſinnes, Acts 26. 18. When we are *delivered from the power of darkneſs, and tranſlated into the Kingdom of Chriſt: in him we have then Redemption through his Blood, even the forgiveneſs of ſinnes*, Col. 1. 13, 14. And *bleſſed are they whoſe iniquities are forgiven, and whoſe ſinnes are covered, to whom the Lord imputeth not ſinne*, Rom. 4. 7. And now *who ſhall condemn us? It is God that juſtifieth us: For there is no Condemnation to them that are in Chriſt Jeſus, that walk not after the fleſh, but after the Spirit*, Rom. 8. 1, 33, 34.

4. With this benefit doth concurre, *our Reconciliation to God*, and our *Adoption*; by which we are made his Sonnes, and God is pleaſed to own us as our Father. For being one with Chriſt the Sonne of God, we are Sonnes by him. For *to as many as receive him, to them gave he Power to become the Sonnes of God, even to them that beliéve in his Name*, Joh. 1. 12. This is the wonderfull Love that the Father hath beſtowed on thoſe that were his Enemies; that they ſhould not only be reconciled to him, by the death of his Sonne, but alſo be called the Sonnes

Sonnes of God, *Rom* 5. 10. 1 *Joh.* 3. 1. For he hath *chosen us in him, before the foundation of the world, that we should be Holy, and without blame before him in love; having predestinated us to the Adoption of Children, by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the Glory of his Grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved*, Ephes. 1. 4, 5, 6. O what an unspeakable Mercy is it, to have the blessed God, whom we had so oft offended, to become our Reconciled Father in Christ. For it is not an empty title that he assumeth; but he hath more abundant love to us, and tenderness of our welfare, then any title can make us understand.

5. And hereupon it doth immediatly follow, that we have a right to the blessed *Inheritance* of his Sonnes, and are certain *Heirs* of his Heavenly Kingdom, *Col.* 1. 12. For if *Sonnes, then Heirs, Heirs of God, and Joint-Heirs with Christ*, Rom. 8. 17. *Being saved by the washing of Regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost, and justified by Grace through Christ, we are made Heirs, according to the hope of Eternal Life*,

Tit. 3.

Tit. 3. 5, 6, 7. *Being begotten againe to a lively hope, by the Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an Inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in Heaven for us,* 1 Pet. 1. 3, 4.

6. With all the *Holy Ghost is given to us*, not only to close us at first with Christ, but to take up his abode in us as his temples, and to be the *Agent*, and *Life* of Christ within us, and to do his work, and maintain his Interest, and clense us of all filthiness of flesh and Spirit, and Sanctifie us throughout, and to strive against, and conquer the flesh, and to keep us by Divine Power through Faith unto Salvation, 1 *Cor.* 6. 19. *Gal.* 5. 17, 22. 2 *Cor.* 6. 1. 1 *Pet.* 1. 5. For *because we are Sonnes, God sendeth forth the Spirit of his Sonne into our hearts, whereby we cry Abba, Father*, Gal. 4. 6. This Spirit of Adopton which we receive, doth *bear witness with our spirits, that we are the Sonnes of God*, Rom. 8. 15, 16. For *if any man have not the spirit of Christ, the same is none of his*, Rom. 8. 9. By this Spirit is the spirit of the world cast out of us; the spirit of pride, and of blindness, and of delusion, and hard-heartedness,

and

and of sensuality, and malice, and hypocrisie, are cast out. By this is Gods *Image* imprinted on our Souls; we are conformed to his blessed *Will*; *we are made partakers of the Divine Nature, being Holy, as God is Holy*, Col. 3. 10. 2 Pet. 1. 4. 1 Pet. 1. 16. Hereby we are delivered from the thraldom of sinne, and the slavery of the Devil; and the seduction of the world, and our treacherous Flesh. Hereby also we are fitted for the Service of God, to which before we were undisposed and unfit. O what an ease is it to the Soul, to be free from so much of the burden of sinne? What an honour is it to have the Spirit of God within us, and to have a Nature so truly Heavenly and Divine? How can it go ill with him that hath *God dwelling in him, and that dwells in God?* 1 Joh. 4. 15.

7. Another of our precious benefits by Christ is, that we *shall be actually imployed in the speciall, and neerest Service of God, that on Earth is to be performed.* Let diseased Souls desire idlenes; and swinish sinners take pleasure in the mire, and feed like ravenous beasts on carrion, or as dogs on dung: but the Saints will ever rejoice in God, and take it for the most

moſt bleſſed life on Earth, when they can but do him the greateſt Service. Let his Enemies that hate his Service, be weary of it, as if it were a toile or drudgery; but his Children will deſire no ſweeter work: They never think themſelves ſo well as when they are moſt ſerviceable to their bleſſed Lord, though at the greateſt coſt and labour to the fleſh. So ſweet is Gods Service, that the more of it we can do, the more is our pleaſure, and honour, and content. Other work *ſpendeth* ſtrength, but this *increaſeth* it: Other work muſt have recreation intermixt, but this is it ſelf the moſt delightfull recreation: Other ſervice is undertaken for the love of the wages; but this is undertaken for the Love of the Maſter, and the work, and is wages it ſelf, to them that go through with it. For other ſervice is but a means, and that to ſome inferior end; but this is a means to the Everlaſting perfection, and bleſſedneſs of the Soul; and ſuch a means as containeth, or Preſently procureth ſomewhat of the end. All the Saints are even here *a choſen Generation, a royal Prieſthood, an holy Nation, a peculiar People, that they ſhould ſhew forth the praiſes of him*

him that hath called them, out of darkness, into his marvelous light: They are an holy Priesthood, to offer up a Spiritual Sacrifice, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ, 1 Pet. 2. 5, 9. Their very bodies are *a living Sacrifice, holy, and acceptable to God, in their reasonable service.* What a sweet work is it to live in the daily Love of God? in his Praises; in the hopes, and sweet fore-thoughts of Everlasting Joyes: The world affordeth not such a Master, nor such a work.

8. Another of the precious benefits by Christ is, *The liberty of accesse in all our wants to God by Prayer, with a promise to be heard.* The flaming sword did keep the way to the tree of life, till Christ had taken it down, and consecrated for us a new and living way, through the Vaile, which is his flesh: and now we have *boldness to enter into the Holiest, by the blood of Jesus: and therefore may draw nier with a true heart in full assurance of Faith*, Heb. 10. 19, 20, 22. When worldlings may cry to their *Baal* in vaine, the *Righteous cry, and the Lord heareth them, and delivereth them out of all their* (hurtfull) *troubles.* O what a Mercy is it in our falls, in our distresses, in our dangers,

in

in our wants, to have a God, a faithfull mercifull Father, to go to, and make our moane to for relief? What a Mercy is it, when our flesh, and our hearts do faile us, when friends, and worldly things all fail us, to have God for the *Rock* of our hearts, and our *Portion?* Psal. 73. 26. When sickness begins to break these bodies, and earthly delights do all forsake us, and death calls us to come to our endless state, then to have a Reconciled Father to go to, and crave his ayd, upon the encouragment of a promise, and recommend our Souls into his hand as to a faithfull Creator, and our sureſt deereſt friend; this is a Mercy that no man can well value, till they come to use it. To know every day, that as oft as ever we come to God, we are alwaies welcome; and that our persons, and prayers are pleasing to him through his Sonne; what a Mercy is it? One would think we should live joyfully, if we had but one such promise as this for Faith to live upon: *Call upon me in the day of trouble, and I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorifie me*, Psal. 50. 15. *Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Sonne,*

Sonne, Joh. 14. 13, 14. No wonder if they be rich, that have ſo free acceſs to ſuch a treaſure; and if they be ſafe that have acceſs to ſo ſure a help. For God is a very preſent *help* in trouble, *Pſal.* 46. 1.

9 Another precious benefit is, that we have *Peace of Conſcience, or ground for it at the leaſt, in our Peace with God:* and *ſo may come to aſſurance of Salvation, and may partake of the Joy in the Holy Ghoſt:* For in this Peace and Joy the Kingdom of God doth much conſiſt. When the chief cauſe of all our fear, and ſorrow is done away, what then is left to break our Peace. When we have no cauſe to fear the flames of Hell, nor the ſting of death, or the appearance of our Judge, any further then to move us to make ready; what then ſhould greatly trouble the Soul. If God and Heaven be not matter of comfort, I know not what is? If we ſaw a man, that had got many Kingdoms, to be ſtill ſad, and dumpiſh becauſe he had no more; we would ſay, he were very ambitious, or covetuous: And yet he might have reaſon for it: But if you have the Love of God, and a title by promiſe to the Hea-

venly Inheritance, and yet you are discontented, and God, and Glory is not enough for you; this is most unreasonable.

10. Another of our precious benefits by Christ is, Our *Spiritual Communion with his Church, and holy members.* We do not only joyne with them in outward Communion, but we unite our desires, and there is an harmony of affections. We are in the maine of one Mind, and Will, and Way: and we joyntly constitute the Body of our Lord: *We are come unto Mount Zion, and unto the City of the Living God, the Heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of Angels, to the general Assembly, and Church of the first born, which are written in Heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the Spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the Mediator of the new Covenant,* Heb. 12. 22, 23, 24. We are joyned to that Body, and have Communion with it; which consisteth both of militant, and triumphant Saints, and of the Angels also. *We are no more strangers and forreiners, but fellow Citizens with the Saints, and of the houshold of God, and are built on the foundation of the*

the Apostles, and Prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the cheif corner-stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together, groweth unto an Holy Temple in the Lord; in whom we also are builded together, for an habitation of God, through the Spirit, Ephes. 2. 19, 20, 21, 22. And as in holy concord we serve the Lord, having *one God, one Christ, one Spirit, one Faith, one Baptism, one Rule,* the Word of God, *one mind, one heart, one work* of Holines, and Righteousnes in the main; *one hope, one Heaven,* the place of our expectations; so have we the fruit of the Prayers of each other, and of all the Church, and have the honour, the safety, and other benefits of being members of so blessed a Society.

Yea we have in this Communion, the whole Church obliged, and disposed according to their capacity to endeavour the good of every member. So that Ministers, and Magistrates, yea though they were Apostles, and Prophets, *Paul,* or *Apollos, all are ours,* 1 Cor. 3. 22. Kings have their *Power for us:* Ministers have their *Gifts for us:* and *for us* they must use them. If we *suffer,* every member must be as forward to assist us, and

if we want, to relieve us according to their power, as if they ſuffered with us, 1 *Cor.* 12. 25, 26.

Yea the Angels are our *Brethren* (Rev. 22. 9.) and *fellow ſervants*, yea *miniſtring ſpirits*, *ſent forth to miniſter for them that ſhall be Heirs of Salvation*, Heb. 1. 14. To *encamp about them*, *and to bear them in their arms*, rejoycing to behold their graces, and proſperity, as was ſhewed before.

11. Another of our precious benefits by Chriſt is, that *All things ſhall work together for our good*, Rom. 8. 28. When we are Sanctified to God, all things are Sanctified to us, to ſerve us for God, and help us to him. Every Creature that we have to do with, is as it were another thing to the Saints, then to other men. They are all wheels in that univerſal Engine of Grace, to carry us to Salvation. The ſame things that are common Mercies to others, are ſpecial to us, as proceeding from a ſpecial Love, and being deſigned to a ſpecial uſe. As *fleſh-pleaſing* is the ultimate end of the ungodly, and all things are thereby debaſed, to be but means to that ignoble end: So the *Pleaſing and fruition of God*, is the End of all

all the Saints, and thereby all things that they have to do with, are advanced to the honour of being Sanctified means to this most high, and noble End: And as they are engaged to use them to this End, and consequently to their own greatest advantage; so God hath engaged himself to bless them in that holy use, and to cause them all by his gracious providence to cooperate to their good. The greatest afflictions, the cruellest persecutions from the most violent enemies, our wants, our weaknesses, and death it self, all must concurre to carry on this work. What then should a Christian fear, but sinne? How honourable, and how safe, and how happy a life may he live, that hath all these assured for his service. And what causeless fears are they that use to afflict the Servants of God, concerning their outward troubles, and necessities? What do we fear, and groan under, and complaine of, but our Fathers physick, and the means of our Salvation? If this one Truth were but believed, and received, and used according to its worth, O what a life would Christians live.

12. The last, and greatest of our be-

nefits by Christ is, *Our Resurrection, and our Justification at the barre of God, and our reception into Glory.* This is the end of all, and therefore containeth all. For this Christ died; for this we are Christians; for this we believe, hope, and labour; for this we suffer, and deny our selves, and renounce this world. Our bodies shall then be spiritual and glorious, no more troubled with infirmities, diseases, or necessities. Our Souls shall be both naturally, and graciously perfected; both in their faculties and qualities. We shall be brought nigh to God: We shall be numbered with the Inhabitants of the Heavenly *Jerusalem*, and be members of that blessed Society, and be companions, and equal with the Angels of God: we shall for ever behold our Glorified Redeemer, and see our own Nature, united to the Godhead; and we shall have the greatest, and neerest intuition and fruition of God, the fullest Love to him, and the sweetest Rest, content, and delight in him, that our created Natures are capable of: We shall everlastingly be imployed in this Love, and delight, and in his Praises with all the Heavenly Host: And the Glory of God

God will ſhine forth in our Glory, and the abundance of his Goodneſs will be communicated to us; and he will be well pleaſed with us, with our praiſes, with all that bleſſed Society, and with our Head: And this will endure to all Eternity.

Chriſtians I have now named in a few words, thoſe Benefits by Chriſt, which the heart of man is not able to value, in any proportion to their unexpreſſible worth: I have named that in an hour, which you muſt enjoy for ever. So much of our Benefits by Chriſt.

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5. The fifth point to be underſtood, in the right Knowledg of Chriſt, is, *The terms on which he conveyeth his Benefits to men, and how we muſt be|made partakers of them.*

And theſe Mercies are of two ſorts, 1. *Common*: 2. *Proper* to them that are Heirs of Salvation. The *Common* are, 1. Thoſe diſcoveries of Grace, that are made even to *Heathens* in the *Creatures, and the merciſull|Providences* of God. Theſe are *Abſolutely*, and freely be-

ſtowed, in ſome meaſure on all, but in a greater meaſure upon ſome as pleaſe the Giver. 2. The Supernatural, or Inſtituted means, of Revealing Chriſt, and Life to the world, and drawing them to a ſaving conſent of Faith. Theſe are, the Goſpel written and preached, with other concomitant helps. The Commiſſion Chriſt hath given to his Embaſſadors, is to preach this Goſpel to all the world, even to every (reaſonable) Creature, without exception, or reſtriction. And it is *Abſolutely*, and freely, given where it is given. But as to the providential diſpoſal of the event, God cauſeth it not to be ſent to all, but to whom he ſeeth meet.

2. The *Proper* or *Special Mercies* are of two ſorts. 1. Some are *Phyſical inherent qualities*, or *performed acts*: 2. And ſome are *adherent Rights*, or *Relations*.

Of the former *inherent* ſort, there are theſe three Degees: 1. There is the firſt ſpecial work of Vocation, Converſion, or Regeneration, cauſing the ſinner to Repent, and Believe, and giving him the Principle of Spiritual Life. 2. There is the beſtowing of the In-dwelling Spirit

Spirit of God, and progreſſive Santification of heart, and life, and perſeverance with Victory. 3. There is the perfecting of all this, in our Glorious Perfection in the life to come.

For the firſt of theſe, God hath not promiſed it Conditionally, or Abſolutely to any individual perſon that hath it not. He hath bound all to Repent, and Believe, but hath not promiſed to make them do it: (only he hath revealed, that there are certain perſons, ſo given to Chriſt, as that they ſhall be infallibly drawn to believe.) But he hath appointed certain means for the ungodly, which they are bound to uſe, in order to their Converſion; and if they will not uſe them, they are without excuſe. If they will, they have very much encouragement from God: Both 1. In the Nature of the means, which are fitted to their ends, and are mighty to bring down, all oppoſitions; and 2. In the Commands, and Inſtitution of God; whoſe Wiſdom and Goodneſs may eaſily reſolve us, that he will not appoint us means in vaine, nor ſet his Creatures on fruitleſs labours: And 3. Alſo from the Iſſue: for no man can ſtand forth and ſay, ſuch a one did

his

his beſt in the Uſe of means, and yet could not attain the End, but fell ſhort of the Grace, and Glory of God.

The diſeaſes of mens Souls, are *wilfullneſs, and blindneſs*: The means of Cure, are the *Perſwaſions*, with the *Revelations* of the Goſpel. Men have the Natural Powers of Underſtanding, and Willing: but they want that right diſpoſition, which we call the Habit, or Moral Power, which is no more then to ſay, *They are Habitually Blind* and *Wilfull*. It is ſo far from being unreaſonable to *teach*, and *perſwade* men that are under ſuch an Impotency as this, that there is nothing in the world, that doth more beſpeak our teaching, and perſwaſions: For this is the Natural, and Inſtituted way to cure them, and give them Power. What means of overcoming *Ignorance* like *Teaching*; and what means of overcoming *Habituated wilfullneſs*, like *Perſwaſion*, added to informing truths? We do not uſe to reaſon men out of a *Natural Impotency*, nor to *perſwade* them to do that, for which they have no Faculties, or Object; but it is the very means of overcoming a *Moral Impotency*, and making men willing

of

of the Good which they rejected. And with this means doth God set in, and infallibly cause it to be effectual with his chosen. Thus no man cometh to the Sonne, except the Father *draw* him; And then for the two following Degrees, of Holiness in our Sanctification, and Glorious Perfection, God hath promised them to those that have this first Degree. For the *Spirit of Holiness* is promised to all that truly *Repent and Believe*, and *Salvation* to all that are *Sanctified, and persevere.* So that the *Right* to these *Inherent* Mercies, being a *Relation*, is conveyed as other *Rights*, and *Relations*, of which we are next to speak.

2. As the *Spirit* by the Operation of the Word upon the heart, conveyeth the foresaid *Inherent* benefits, or qualities and acts, so the *Promise* of Grace, indited by Christ, and the Spirit, doth as a Deed of Gift, or Testament, or Act of Oblivion, bestow on us our *Rights*, and *Spiritual Relations*; and from these they do result, as the immediate instrumental Cause. Thus doth he give Power, or Right to as many as *receive* him, to become the Sonnes of God, *Joh.* 1. 12.

Thus

Thus doth he give us Pardon, Juſtification, Adoption, and our Right to further Grace, and Glory. And theſe Promiſes are Conditional; and our Repenting, and Believing in Chriſt is the Condition. And therefore till Converſion do bring us to Repent and Believe, we have no Right to any of theſe benefits of the Promiſe. And therefore though our Repentance and Faith, be none of the *Proper Cauſe* of our Juſtification, or Right; yet the main work, in order to our procurement of theſe benefits, that's now to be done, is to perſwade the ſinner to Repent and Believe; to turn that he may live: For Gods Act of Grace is paſt already, and the Conditional Pardon is granted long ago, and will effectually Pardon us, as ſoon as we perform the Condition, and not before. Till then we hinder the Efficacy of the Deed of Gift: For Unbelief and Impenitency, are true *Cauſes* of mens *Condemnation*, though Faith, and Repentance be not *Proper Cauſes* of their *Salvation*.

Theſe Promiſes being Conditional, we cannot be aſſured of our part in the benefits, but by being aſſured that we perform

form the Condition. By this you may ſee the Nature of preſumption: When men ſay, they believe that which never was promiſed; or believe that they have right to the Bleſſings that are promiſed to others, and not to them; or believe that they ſhall have the benefits promiſed, when they perform not the Conditions; all this is preſuming, and not true believing. If men believe that God is reconciled to them, and will Pardon them, and Juſtifie them, and ſave them, when they are unconverted, impenitent, unregenerate men; this is not indeed a believing of God, that hath never made them any ſuch promiſe, nor ever told them any ſuch matter, but the contrary: But it is a believing the falſe deluſions of the Devil, and their own hearts. He that will claim any title to Chriſt, and Pardon, and Salvation, muſt have ſomething to ſhew for it; yea and ſomething more then the moſt of the world have to ſhew: For the moſt ſhall be ſhut out. Every man therefore that regardeth his Salvation, muſt ſeriouſly ask his Soul this queſtion, *What have I to ſhew for my title to Salvation, more then the moſt of the World can ſhew?* It is not ſaying, *I hope*

hope to be ſaved, that will ſerve the turn' except I can give a Reaſon of my hopes' Thouſands that lay claim to Salvation ſhall miſs of it, becauſe they have no title to it. And that which you muſt have to ſhew is this: A *Promiſe*, or *Deed of Gift* on *Gods* part, and the *fulfilling of the Condition* on *your* part. God ſaith to all men, *Who ever Repenteth, Believeth, or is converted, ſhall be ſaved.* When you have found that you Repent of all your ſinnes, and truly believe, and are converted to God, then, and not till then, you may conclude that you ſhall be ſaved.

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6. The ſixth Point to be underſtood, or believed, concerning theſe Benefits of Chriſt, is, the infallible Certainty of them. While men look on the promiſed Glory to come, as on an uncertain thing, they will hardly be drawn to venture, and let go the porfits, and pleaſures of the world to attaine it; much leſs to part with life it ſelf. The life of all our Chriſtian motion, is the unfeigned belief of the Truth of Gods Word, and ſpecially of the unſeen things of the world

world to come. Such as mens belief of Heaven, and Hell is, ſuch will be the bent of their hearts, and the courſe of their lives, and ſuch they will be in yielding to ſinne, or in reſiſting it, and in all the ſervice they do for God. As all men would take another courſe, if they did but ſee Heaven, and Hell with their eyes; ſo all men would preſently throw away their worldly fleſhly pleaſures, and turn to God, and a holy life, if they did but as throughly believe the Joyes, and torments to come; as if they ſaw them. Fleſh and blood can hardly judg of things, without the help of ſenſe; and fleſhly men take all things to be fantaſmes or nothings, that are not within the judgment of their ſenſes. They muſt ſee it, or feel it, or taſt it, or hear it; and Believing is a way that hardly ſatisfies them; though it be God himſelf, that they are to believe. Believing is, truſting the Credit of an other: and we are naturally loth to truſt to any, but our eyes, or other ſenſes. We are ſo falſe our ſelves, that we are ready to meaſure God by our ſelves, and to think that he is a deceiver, becauſe that *we* are ſuch. And hence it is that the world is ſo ungodly,

godly, that they venture on ſinne, and will not be at the coſt, and labour of a Heavenly life; becauſe they take the matters of the life to come, to be but uncertainties, and have not ſo true a belief of them, as might poſſeſs them with a deep apprehenſion of their reallity. How ſhould the Word profit them, that mixe it not with Faith, *Heb.* 4. 2. Unleſs by begetting Faith it ſelf. O what a change would a ſound belief of the Scriptures, make in the world. But having ſpoken ſo oft of this, in other writings, I ſhall ſay no more of it now. So much of the Knowledg of Chriſt.

II. I have ſhewed you the firſt part of this Direction, *How Chriſt muſt be Received underſtandingly.* I now come to the ſecond, which is, that *He muſt be Received heartily.* As God muſt be loved, ſo Chriſt muſt be believed in, with all the heart, and Soul, and ſtrength: If not with All in a *Perfect* degree, (for that will not be till we come to Heaven) yet with *All* in a *predominant prevalent* degree. There are many convictions, and good meanings, and wiſhes, and purpoſes,

purposes, which may proceed from common Grace, and be found in those that never shall be saved: These may be called (analogically) Faith, and Love, and Desire, as those are that are found in the truly Regenerate: and yet the persons in whom they are found, may not fitly be called Believers, or Lovers of God; because a man is to be denominated, from that in him which is predominant, and hath the chief power on his heart. The Soul of man is not so simple as to move but one way: Its state in this life is to stand between two differing Competitours, God and the world, Spirit and flesh; and there is no man, that is Totally given up to either of them. No man is so good, and spiritual, that hath not something in him that is bad and carnal: And no man is so fully addicted to God, but the Creature hath too much interest in his heart. Nor is there any man so given up to the Creature, in whom God hath no manner of interest at all, in his Estimation, and Affections; if he indeed believe that there is a God. At least it is not so with all that are unconverted. Otherwise, 1. What is it that common Grace

doth, if it no whit dispose them towards God? Certainly it would not else be Grace. 2. And if this were not so, then we must say, that no unregenerate man hath any Good in him, that is truly Moral: For if there be no interest of God in his mind or will, there can be no Good in him. But this is contrary to Scripture, and experience. It was undoubtedly some Moral Good, which Christ loved the man for, in *Marke* 10. 21. Who was not far from the Kingdom of God. 3. Otherwise all men must be equally departed from God, which is contrary to experience: 4. Yea all men must be as bad on Earth (privatively) as in Hell: which certainly is false. I may well say, that on Earth there is some Good in the worst; much more in those, that are almost perswaded to be converted Christians. Many a thought of the Goodness of God and the necessity of a Saviour, and of the Love of Christ, and of the Joyes of Heaven, may be stirring, and working in the minds of the unsanctified; but if they take not up the Heart for Christ, the person is not a true Believer. As the Gospel must be Believed to be True, so Christ that is offered us in the Gospel *as Good*;

Good; must be Heartily, and Thankfully accepted accordingly: And the Glory, the Justification, Reconciliation with God, and other benefits procured by him, and offered with him, must be valued, and desired above all earthly fleshly things. If you are convinced that sinne is evill, as contrary to God, and hurtfull to you, and hereupon have some mind to let it go; and some wishes that Christ would save you from it, and yet still have a Love to it that is greater then your dislike, and the bent of your heart is more for it, then against it, and your habituate desires, are rather to keep, then to leave it; this is not Sanctification, nor a saving consent to be saved by Christ. If you have some convictions that Holiness is good, as being the Image of God, and pleasing to him, and necessary to your Salvation, and so should have some mind of Holyness on these grounds; yet if you have on the other side a greater aversness to it, because it would deprive you of the pleasures of your sinne, and the Habitual inclination of your will, is more against it then for it; certainly this will not stand with true Sanctification; of Faith in

Christ, to save you from the power of sinne by his Spirit. Thousands deceive themselves, by misunderstanding some common passages, that are spoken to comfort afflicted Consciences; viz. *That the least true desires after Grace, do prove the Soul to be Gracious.* This is true, if you speak of the least Desires, which are Predominant in the Soul, when our *Desire* is more habitually then our *unwillingness*, and we thus preferre Christ before all the world, the least of this is an Evidence of Saving Grace. But such Desires as are subdued by the contrary Desires; and such a will as is accompanyed with a greater unwillingness, habitually, and such a Faith, as is drowned in greater unbelief, these are not Evidences of a saving change; nor can you justly gather any special comfort from them. He that hath more unbelief then Belief, is not to be called a Believer, but an unbeliever: And he that hath more hatred, or dislike of God, and Holiness, then Love to them, is not to be called Godly, but ungodly, nor a Lover of God, but a hater of him. I am easily perswaded, that many of you that are ungodly, could be contented that God be Glorified, if his

his Glory do not cross your carnal interest, and so you desire Gods Glory even for it self, as that which is absolutely Good in it self: But if your fleshly interest be so dear to you, that you will sacrifice Gods Glory to it, and had rather God were dishonoured, then your fleshly intereſt contradicted, it is your flesh then that is made your God, and your chief End. It is not every wish, or mind of Christ, no not to save you from sinne as sinne, that will prove you true Beleievers: Nor is it every minding of God, or love to him, no not as one apprehended by you, to be the chiefest Good, and desirable for himself, as your End, that will prove indeed that you savingly love him; as long as the contrary mind and will, is Habitually predominant in you. Such as the very habit and bent of a mans heart is, such indeed is the man. Its possible for a man, even a good man, to have two contrary ends, and intentions; yea ultimate ends; as that which is desired for it self, and referred to nothing else, is called *Ultimate*: but it is not possible for him, to have two *principall predominant* Ends. So far as we are carnal still, we make the pleasing of

our flesh our ultimate End; For doubtless we do not sinne only, by pleasing the flesh, as *a means to Gods Glory*; nor only in the mischoosing of other means: But yet this is none of our *Principal* End, so far as men are truly Sanctified. And because that is called a mans mind, or will, which is the chiefest, and highest in his mind, and will; therefore we use to denominate men, from that only which beareth rule in them: And thus we may say with *Paul*, *It is not I, but sinne that dwelleth in me.* For a disowned act, that proceedeth from us, against the bent, and habit of our wills, and the course of our lives, from the remnants of a carnal misguided will, is not it that must denominate the person, nor is so fully ours as the contrary act. And therefore though indeed we sinfully participate of it, yet when the question is, whether Believing, or unbeliefe, sinning or obeying, be *my* work; it is not Comparatively to be called *mine*, which I am much more against then for. So on the other side, if the unsanctified have some transient, superficial, uneffectual acts of Desire, or Faith, or Love to God, which are contrary to the bent,

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and habit of their hearts, this is not *theirs*, nor imputable to them, so far as hence, to give them their Denomination. It is not *they* that do it, but the common workings of the Spirit upon them.

If ever then you would be assured that your are Christians, look to the *Habitual bent* of your hearts, and see that you do not only talk of Scripture, and slightly believe it, and speak well of Christ, with some good wishes, and meanings, and purposes; but, as you love your Souls, see that Christ be Received as your dearest Saviour, with Thankfullness, and greatest Love; and as your Soveraign Lord, with true subjection; and that he have your Superlative estimation and Affections, and all things in the world be put under him in your Souls. This must be so, if you will have the portion of Believers. No Faith that is short of this, will prove you Christ's Disciples indeed, or Heirs of the Promises made to Believers. The voice of Christ that calls to you in the Gospel, is, *My sonne give me thy heart*, Prov. 23. 26. Do what thou wilt in waies of duty, and think as highly as thou wilt of thy self, thou art no true Believer in

Christ's account, till thou hast given him thy heart. If he have thy tongue, if he have thy good opinion; nay if thy body were burnt in his Cause, if he had not thy *Love*, thy *Heart*, it were as nothing, 1 *Cor.* 13. 3. For thy works, and sufferings, are so far acceptable (through Christ) as they are testimonies of this, that Christ hath thy heart. If he have not thy heart, he takes it as if he had nothing: And if he have this, he takes it as if he had all. For this is not only preferred by him before all; but also he knows that this commandeth all. If Christ have thy *Heart*, the Devil will not have thy tongue, and life; the Alehouse, or a Harlot will not have thy body; nor the world will not have the principal part of thy life. If Christ have thy *Heart*, it will be heard much in thy conference; it will be seen in thy labours: For that which hath a mans *Heart* will hardly be hid, unless he purposely hide it, which a Christian neither can, nor ought to do. It would make a man wonder to hear some wretches, that will runne from God as fast as they can, and yet face you down, that God hath their hearts: that have no mind, so much as

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to meditate, or talk of Chriſt, or his precious Blood, or myſterious Redemption, or the glorious Kingdom purchaſed by him; that will be at neither, coſt nor labour in his Service, and yet profeſs that Chriſt hath their hearts: that will refuſe a Holy Heavenly life, and perhaps make a ſcorn of it, and maliciouſly prate againſt the Sanctified, and yet will ſtand to it that the Holy Ghoſt, the Sanctifier of the Elect, hath their hearts. No wonder if thoſe hearts are ill managed, and in a miſerable deceived ſtate, that are ſo unacquainted with themſelves.

Faith entreth at the Underſtanding, but it hath not all its eſſential parts, and is not the Goſpel Faith indeed, till it have poſſeſſed the will. The *heart* of Faith is wanting, till Faith hath taken poſſeſſion of the *heart*. For by *Faith* Chriſt *dwelleth* in the *Heart*, Epheſ. 3. 17. And if he dwell not in the *heart*, he dwells not in the *Man*, in a ſaving ſort. He had ſome intereſt in *Judas*, *Simon Magus*, *Ananias*, and *Saphira*, as to the *head*, and perhaps ſomewhat more in a ſuperficial ſort. But Satan *entred* into the *heart* of one, and *filled* the *heart* of another

another of them with a lie, and the *heart* of the third was not *right in the sight of God*, and therefore he had no part, or lot in Christ, but was still in the gall of bitterness, and bond of iniquity: and all because Christ was not heartily entertained, *Acts* 5. 3 & 8. 22, 23. It is in the *heart* that the word must have its rooting, or else it will wither in time of tryal. It is seeking with the *whole heart* that is the evidence of the blessed, *Psal.* 119 2. And it is a *feigned turning*, when men turn not to God with the *whole heart*, Jer. 3. 10. This is Gods promise concerning his Elect; *I will give them a heart, to know me, that I am the Lord, and they shall be my people, and I will be their God: for they shall return unto me with their whole heart*, Jer. 24. 7. See then that the *heart* be unfeignedly delivered up to Christ: For if Christ have it not, the flesh, the world, and the Devil will have it. Your Hearts must be a dwelling for one of these Masters; choose you whether.

It is the damnation of most professed Christians, that they have nothing for Christ but a good opinion, or a few good words, or outside services, or some sleight

sleight Religiousness on the by; when the flesh, and the world go away with their hearts; and yet they will not know it, nor confess it. Christ will not be an underling, or servant to your flesh. Your Hearts he hath bought, and your Hearts he will have; or you are none of his. If *he* shall have nothing from *you* but a *name*, *you* shall have nothing but the name of his purchased Salvation.

III. The last part of the Direction yet remains, *viz.* that *you must close with Christ entirely*, *as* well as *Understandingly* and *Heartily*. It is *whole Christ*, that must be received with the whole heart.

For the understanding of this, it must be known, both *How* and *Why* Christ is offered to us.

As he came into the world to destroy the works of the Devil, 1 *Joh.* 3. 8 and to *seek* and *save* that which was lost, *Luke* 19. 10 And by his Mediation to reconcile us to God, and bring us up to Glory; so two things were to be done, for the accomplishment of this: First he was himself to Merit our Salvation, and

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pay the price of our Redemption on the Croſs, and in his own Perſon to conquer the world, the Devil, and death, and the grave: And then he was by his Interceſſion in the Heavens, to make application of this, and beſtow the benefits thus purchaſed by him. And becauſe it was he, and not we that made the purchaſe, it therefore pleaſed the Father, that the purchaſed treaſure ſhould be put into his hands, and not immediately put into ours. He is become our Treaſury, and authorized to be our Head: All Power is given him in Heaven, and Earth. We have ſo fouly miſcarryed already, that he will no more truſt his honour in our hands, as at firſt he did. We ſhall have nothing, of Pardon, or Grace, or Glory, but what we have in and from the Sonne. *God hath given us Eternal Life, and this Life is in his Sonne: He that hath the Sonne hath Life, and he that hath not the Sonne, hath not Life*, 1 Joh. 11. 12. It is not only the Nature, and Perſon of Chriſt, that is to be believed in, but it is the Perſon, as impowred to certain ends, and clothed with his Office, yet we muſt now entertain. Now the Office of Chriſt being for our Salvation,

Salvation, and the Glory of God, is suited to these happy ends.

And our Necessities are principally in these three points. 1. We have the Guilt of sinne upon us to be pardoned, and the Wrath of God, and Curse of the Law, and the punishment of sinne to be removed. 2. We have the Corruption of our Nature to be healed; the power of sinne to be destroyed; the Image of God repaired on us; and our hearts, and lives to be acted, and ordered according to the Will of God; and to these ends, Temptations to be conquered; and our Souls, directed, strengthned, and preserved to the end. 3. We must be raised from the Grave at the last day; we must be Justified in Judgment, and possessed of that Glory which is the End of our Faith. To this Justification, Sanctification, and Glorification may the rest be reduced.

Now the Office of Christ is suited to these Necessities of ours: and as we cannot possibly be saved, unless all these Necessities be supplied, and these works done for us: so we cannot possibly have these things done, but by Accepting of Christ, as Authorized, and impowred

red by his Office, and Perfections, to do them.

The Glory that God will have by this work, I have before expreſſed to you at large. He will have his Juſtice, & Wiſdom, and Power, and Holineſs, and Mercy to be demonſtrated, and honoured by Chriſt. And therefore Chriſt hath reſolved to give out none of his benefits, but in ſuch manner, and waies, as may beſt attain theſe higheſt Ends.

Theſe ſeveral points therefore I muſt intreate you here to note diſtinctly.

1. That you muſt be brought into a ſpecial Relation to the *Perſon of Chriſt, as cloathed with his Office*, before you can lay claim to his *Saving Benefits*. He is the Head, and you muſt become his Members: He is the Husband of the Church, and you muſt become his Spouſe, and ſo of the reſt. This is called our *Uniting* to Chriſt, which muſt go before your further Communion with him. It is the Will of God, that you ſhall never receive his Benefits, without, or before you receive his Sonne: (Except only thoſe Benefits, which go before your Union with Chriſt himſelfe, in order to the accompliſhing it; as the

the Gospel, the gift of Faith to the Elect, *&c.)* You shall never have actual Pardon, Justification, Adoption, Sanctification, or Glory, till you have first saving interest in Christ himself. He is the *Vine*, and we are the *Branches*: we must be planted into him, and live in him, or else we can have nothing further from God, nor do nothing acceptable to God. And therefore the first, and great work of Faith is to Receive, and close with the Person of Christ, as cloathed with his Office.

2. Understand and note, that as you shall not have his great *Benefits* before, or without his *Person*, so God hath resolved, that you shall not have his Special *Benefits*, unless you will take them *all together*. (I speak of men at age, that are capable of all.) You shall not have Pardon, and Justification, or Glory, without Sanctification; nor the Comforts of Christ, without the guidance, and government of Christ. You must have all, or none.

3. From hence it follows, that therefore you must Receive, and close with Christ Entirely, in his whole Office, as he is to accomplish all these works, or else

else you cannot be United to him. He will not be divided: You shall not have Christ as a Justifier of you, if you will not have him as a Guid, and Ruler, and Sanctifier of you. He will not be a partial Saviour: If you will not consent that he shall save you from your sinnes, he will not consent to save you from Hell.

4. Understand, and note that Christ will look to his *Fathers Interest, and Honour*, and his *own*, as well as to your Salvation; yea and before it. And therefore you must not hope for any Mercy from him, in any way that is dishonourable to him, or that is inconsistent with his own blessed Ends, and Interest. And therefore do not look for any such Grace from him, as shall discharge you from your duty, or give you liberty to dishonour, or disobey him: Nor do not think that you shall have him Related to you only for your own ends, but on terms of highest honour to God, and your Redeemer. And do not think that your Grace is ever the less free, because Gods Honour is thus preferred: For if you are Christians indeed, you will take Gods Interest, as your own highest Interest, and will confess, that you could not have your

your own Ends, and welfare any other way.

5. Understand and Note also, that as all your Mercies are in the hand of Christ, so Christ hath appointed in his Gospel, a certain way and course of means, in which he will bestow it: And you cannot expect it from him, in any other way, but his own. As God hath made Christ the way, and no man cometh to the Father but by him, so Christ hath ordained a standing course of means, which are his way for the making over of his Benefits: and here you must have them, or go without them.

6. Understand and Note, that there are *some* of Christ's Ends, and Benefits, that the very *Natural man desires*, and some that *Corrupted Nature* is against. Now it is therefore the established way of Christ, to Promise us those which we *can desire*, on Condition that we will also *accept* of, and *submit to those that we are against*. Not but that his Grace doth dispose men to the performance of such Conditions: But his Grace worketh by means: and a *Conditionall Promise* is his stablished *means*, to draw mans heart to the *Performance* of the Condition: (which

well considered, is a sufficient answer to the Arguments that are commonly urged against the Conditionality of the Promise.) As the Spirit doth Powerfully work within; so he useth that Word from without, as his Instrument, which worketh Sapientially, and Powerfully to the same work. If a Physician have two medicines to give his patient, as necessary for his cure, the one very sweet, and the other bitter; the one which he loves, and the other which he loaths, he will Promise him the *Sweeter*, if he will take the *Bitter* one; that by the *love* of one, he may prevail against the *loathing* of the other, and may tice it down. He will not *promise* the *bitter* one which is loathed, and make the Taking of the *sweet* one the Condition: He will not say, *I will give thee this Aloes, on Condition thou wilt take this Sugar:* but contrary; *I will give thee the sweeter, if thou wilt take the bitter.*

In Christs Ends, and Works, 1. We Naturally are more willing of that which makes for our selves directly, then of that which makes directly for the Honour of God, and the Redeemer. We preferre our own Ends before Gods Glory: And therefore

therefore Christ hath so ordered the Condition of his Promises, that unless we will take him, in his Relations of Dignity as King and Lord, and will make the Glory, and Pleasing of God our principal End, we shall have none of him, or his Saving Benefits. For he came not to fulfill our selfish desires, but to fetch us off from our selves, and recover us to God, that he might have his own. And if we will not have our All in God, we shall have Nothing. 2. And Naturally we are willing, as to our own Benefits, to be pardoned, and freed from the Curse of the Law, and the flames of Hell, and Natural death, and punishment: And therefore we are thus farre Naturally willing of free Justification. But we are unwilling to let go the seeming profit, and credit, and pleasure of sinne, and to deny the flesh, and forsake the world, and we are averse to the Spiritual felicity of the Saints, and to the Holiness of heart, and life, that is the way to it. And therefore Christ hath most wisely so ordered it, in the tenor of his Promises, that our Repentance and Faith, shall be the Condition of our Justification, and deliverance from death and Hell: And

this Faith is the believing in him, and Accepting him Entirely in his whole Office, to Sanctifie us, and Rule us, as well as to Juſtifie us: And thus we muſt take him wholly, or we ſhall have none of him. And the Accepting him as our Teacher, and Sanctifier, and King, is as much; (at leaſt, the Condition of our Juſtification, and Pardon, and diliverance from Hell,) as the Accepting him as a Juſtifier of us, is. He that had the Power in his own hands, and that made the free Promiſe, or Deed of Gift, hath put in ſuch Conditions, as his own Wiſdom ſaw beſt; and they are ſuch as ſuit moſt congruouſly to *all* his Ends; even the Glory of God, in all his Attributes, and the Redeemers Glory, and our own, and moſt full and free Salvation: And on his Conditions muſt we have his Benefits, or we ſhall never have them.

7. Laſtly Underſtand and Note, that the Means which Chriſt hath reſolved on for Teaching, and Ruling us, ordinarily, are *his Word, his Miniſters, and his Spirit:* all muſt be ſubmitted to together, where they may be had, and none of them laid by, by ſeparation. His *Word*, is

is the *Grammar*, or *Book*, as it were, that we must learn: His *Ministers* must teach us this *Book*: And his *Spirit* (who in the Apostles, and Prophets indited, and sealed it) must inwardly teach us, by powerfull Illumination. The Word is Gods Laws: the Ministers are his Embassadours, or Heraulds to proclaime them, and command obedience in his Name: and his Spirit must open mens hearts to entertain them. The Word is Gods Seed: the Ministers are the Husbandmen, or Servants that sow it: and the Spirit must give the increase; without which, our planting, and watering will do nothing. He therefore that takes Christ for his Master, and King, must resolve to be taught, and ruled by his established means, even by his Word, and Ministers, and Spirit conjunct: For he that *refuseth* and *despiseth* these, doth *refuse*, and *despise* Christ; and consequently the Father that sent him, *Luke* 10. 16. 1 *Thes.* 4. 8. For it was never the meaning of Christ, when he became the Teacher, and King of the Church, to stay on Earth, and personally, and visiby to teach them himself: but these three are his means, which all must sub-

mit to, that will be his Subjects, and Disciples. And he that despiseth the *Word*, shall be destroyed, *Prov.* 13. 13. He that will not have the Word, Ministry, and Spirit teach him, will not have Christ teach him: and he that refuseth to be ruled by these three, shall be destroyed as a Rebel against Christ himself, *Luke* 19. 27. Still it is supposed that Ministers must Teach, and Rule according to this Word.

And the *Society in which Christ* will Teach and govern us, is his *Church*: As members therefore of the *Universal Church*, and in *Communion* with his *Particular* Church, where we live and have opportunity, we must wait on Christ for his Teaching and Benefits. For this is his Schoole, where his Disciples must diligently attend and learn.

Lay all this together, and this is the summe: The Object of Justifying, Saving Faith, is One only undivided Christ, one in Person, but of two Natures, God, and Man; in Office the Mediator between God and man, who hath already done the work of Sanctification, and Merit, and is authorized further to bestow the Benefits: By the Gospel Grant he

he hath given himself as Head, and Husband, Teacher, King, and Saviour, to all that will entirely, and heartily accept him; and with himself he giveth Justification by the Promise, Sanctification by the Word, Ministry, and Spirit, and final Absolution, and Everlasting Life. If ever then you will have Christ, and Life, you must accept him in all these Essentials of his Person, and Office, and that to the Ends, which his Redemption was intended for; you must be willing to be Sanctified by him, as well as to be Justified: You must at once unfeignedly become his Disciples, his Subjects, his Members, if you would become his saved ones. You must consent, that as your Teacher, and your Lord, he shall Teach and Rule your heart, and life, by his Word, Ministers, and Spirit, in Communion with his Church. No barre or exception must be put in, nor reservation made against any one of these parts of his Office. If you yield not to those parts of his Saving work, that tend but to the compleative growth, you sinne, and deprive your selves of the Benefit; but if you yield not to those that must make you truly Sanctified, and Justified

men, you cannot be ſaved. The Eſſentials of Chriſt's Perſon, and Office, do conſtitute him the *Chriſt*, and if he be not received in all thoſe Eſſentials, he is not received as Chriſt.

And thus I have given you the ſumme of the Goſpel, and the deſcription of Faith, and true Chriſtianity in this Direction for a right cloſing with the Lord Jeſus Chriſt. And experience of moſt that I diſcourſe with, perſwades me to think this Direction of great neceſſity, and to intreat you throughly to peruſe, and conſider it: I find abundance of ignorant people, that talk much of Chriſt, but know very little of him: that can ſcarce tell us whether he be God or man, or which Perſon in the Trinity he is, nor to what End he was incarnate, and died, nor what Relation he ſtands in to us, or what uſe he is of, or what he now is, or what he is engaged to do for us. But if we ask them about their hopes of Salvation, they almoſt overlook the Redemption by Chriſt, and tell us of nothing but Gods Mercies, and their own good meanings, and endeavours. And I am afraid too many Profeſſors of Piety, (do look) almoſt all, at the Natural part of Religion,

and

and the mending of their own hearts, and lives, (and I would this were better done) while they forget the supernatural part, and little are affected with the infinite Love of God in Christ. I desire such to consider these things: 1. You overlook the summe of your Religion, which is Christ Crucified, besides whom *Paul* desired to know nothing. 2. You overlook the fountain of your own life, and the author of your supplies; and you strive in vaine for Sanctification, or Justification, if you seek them not from a Crucified Christ. 3. You leave undon the principal part of your work, and live like moral Heathens, while you have the name of Christians. Your daily work is to study God in the face of his Sonne; and to labour with all Saints to comprehend the *height*, and *bredth*, and *length*, and *depth*, and to know the *Love* of Christ, which passeth knowledg. *Eph.* 3. 18. 19. All your Graces should be daily quickned, and set awork by the life of Faith, in the contemplation of the Redeemer, and his blessed work. This is the weight that must set all the wheels agoing. You do God no Service, that he can accept, if you serve him not in this

this Gospel-work, of loving, trusting, and admiring, and praising him in the Redeemer, and for his Redemption. 4. And so you rob God of the principal part of his Glory, which you are to give him; which is for this most glorious work of our Redemption. I pray you read over again the *Ends* of this work, which I laid down in the beginning of this Direction. 5. Moreover you rob your selves of your principal comfort, which must all come in, by living upon Christ. 6. And you harden the *Antinomians*, and *Libertines*, and tempt men to their extreams, that runne from us as *Legalists*, and as men that Savour not the Doctrine of free Grace, and are not of a Gospel-Spirit, and conversation. I would our great neglect of Christ had not been a snare to these mistaken Souls, and a stumbling block in their way.

O Sirs, if a thought of your hearts, if a word of your mouths, have not some relation to Christ, to suspect it, yea reject it. Call it not a Sermon or a Prayer, nor a duty, that hath nothing of Christ in it. Though the pure Godhead be your principal End, yet there is no way to this End, but by Christ: and

and though Love, which is exercised on that *End*, must animate all your graces, and duties, as they are *Means* to that End; yet Faith hath Love in it, or else it is not the Christian Faith; and Christ is the Object of your Faith and Love: and your perfect Everlasting Love will be animated by Christ: For your Love and Praise, will be to him that was slain, and Redeemed us to God by his Blood, out of every Kindred, Tongue, and Nation, and made us Kings, and Priests to God. So much for the fifth Direction.

DIRECT. VI. The next Direction which I would give you for a through Conversion is this; *See that the flesh be throughly mortified, and your hearts be throughly taken off the World, and all its pleasures, and profits, and honours, and that the Roote of your fleshly Interest prevaile not at the heart, and that you think not of reconciling God, and the World, as if you might secure your Interest in both.*

This is a very common cause of the deceit, and destruction, of such as verily think they are converted. It is the very

very Nature, and buſineſs of true Converſion, to turn mens hearts from the fleſh, and from the world to God, and from an earthly and ſeeming happineſs, to a Heavenly Real Everlaſting Happineſs. And when men are affrighted into ſom kind of Religiouſneſs, and yet never learnt to deny themſelves, and never mortified their fleſhly mind, but the love of this world, is ſtill the chiefeſt principle at their hearts; and ſo go on in Profeſſion of godlineſs, with a ſecret reſerve, that they will look as well as they can to their outward proſperity, whatever become of their Religion, and they will have no more to do with the matters of another world, then may ſtand with their bodily ſafety in this world; theſe are the miſerable deluded Hypocrites, whoſe hopes will prove, as the giving up of the ghoſt; whom Chriſt will diſown in their greateſt extremities, after all their ſeeming Religiouſneſs. O Sirs, look to this as ever you would be happy. Its an eaſie, its a common, its a moſt dangerous thing, to ſet upon a courſe of outward Piety, and yet keep the world next your hearts, and take it ſtill as a great part of your felicity, and ſecretly to

love

love your former lusts, while you seem to be converted. The heart is so deceitfull, that you have great cause to watch it narrowly in this point: It will closely cherish the love of the world, and your fleshly pleasures, when it seems to renounce them, and when your tongue can speak contemptuously of them. It was not for nothing that Christ would have the first fruits of his Gospel-Church (who were to be the Example of their successours) to sell all, and lay it down at the feet of his Apostles: And it is his standing Rule, that *Whoever he be, that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be his Disciple*, Luke 14. 33. In estimation, affection, and resolution, it must be forsaken by all that will be saved; and also in practice, when ever God calls us to it. You can have but one Happiness: If you will needs have it in this world, in the contenting of your flesh, there is no hope of having it also in another world, in the fruition of God. If you think not God and Heaven enough for you, and cannot let go the Prosperity of the flesh for them, you must let go all your hopes of them. God will not halve it with the world in your hearts, nor

part

part ſtakes with the fleſh; much leſs will he be below them, and take their leavings: Heaven will not be theirs, that ſet not by it more then Earth. God will not call that Love to him *Sincere*, which is not a Superlative Love, and able to make you even hate all thoſe things, that would draw away your affections, and obedience from him, *Luke* 14. 26, 27. There's no talk of ſerving God, and Mammon, and compounding you a Happineſs of Earth, and Heaven. Do therefore as Chriſt bids you, *Luke* 14. 28, 29, 30.

Sit down, and *count what it muſt coſt you, if you will be ſaved*; and on what rates it is, that you muſt follow Chriſt. Can you voluntarily, for the love of him, and the hope of Glory, take up your Croſs, and follow him in poverty, in loſſes, in reproaches; though ſcornes, and ſcourgings, and priſons and death? Do you value his loving kindneſs better then life, *Pſal.* 63. 3? Can you deny your eyes, and your appetites their deſires? Can you conſent to be vile in the eyes of men, and to tame your own fleſh, and keep it in ſubjection, and live a fleſh-diſpleaſing life, that having *ſuffered* with

with Christ, you may also be *glorified* with him, *Rom.* 8. 17. If you cannot consent to these terms, you cannot be Christians, nor you cannot be Saved. If you *must* needs be rich, or *must* be honourable, yea, if you *must* needs save your estates, or liberties, or lives, it's past all question, you *must* needs let go Christ, and Glory: If you *must needs* have the world, you must needs lose your Souls. If you *must* have your good things here, you must not have them hereafter too, but be tormented, when Christ's sufferers are comforted, *Luke* 16. 25. These hopes of purveying for the flesh, as long as they can; and then of being saved, when they can stay here no longer, is it that hath deceived many a thousand, to their undoing. It's a strang thing to see how the world doth blind very knowing men, and how unacquainted these Hypocrites are with their own hearts. What a confident profession of down-right godliness many of them will make, yea of some extraordinary height in Religion, when nothing is so dear to to them, as their present prosperity, and God hath not neer so much interest in them as the flesh? What contrivances

some

ſome of them make for riches, or riſing in the world? And how tender others are of their honour with men; and how tenacious they are of their Mammon of unrighteouſneſs; and how much money, and great men can do with them: And moſt of them pamper their fleſh, and ſerve it in a cleanlier way of Religiouſneſs, even as much, though not ſo diſgraceſully, and groſsly, as drunkards, and whoremongers do, in a more diſcernable ſenſuality. If the times do but change, and countenance any errour, how ſmal an Argument will make their judgments bend with the times: If truth or duty muſt coſt them deer: O how they will ſhift, and ſtretch, and wriggle, to prove Truth to be no Truth, and duty to be no duty; and no Argument is ſtrong enough to ſatisfie them, when the fleſh doth but ſay, *Its bitter, its dangerous! it may be my undoing.*

Its none of my meaning, that any ſhould needleſly runne into ſuffering, or croſs their governours, and themſelves, through a ſpirit of pride, ſingularity, and contradiction: But that men ſhould think themſelves truly Religious, that keep ſuch reſerves for their fleſhly intereſt,

tereſt, and ſhew by the very drift of their lives, that they are worldlings, and never felt what it was to be crucified to the world, and deny themſelves, but are Religious on this ſuppoſition only, that it may ſtand with their worldly ends, or at leaſt not undo them in the world; this is a lamentable hypocritical ſelf-deceit. When God hath ſo plainly ſaid, *Love not the World, nor the things that are in the World: If any man love the World, the Love of the Father is not in him*, 1 Joh. 2. 15. Nay that the neighbourhood, and all the Country that know them, ſhould ring of the worldlyneſs of ſome, that think themſelves good Chriſtians; and yet they will not ſee it themſelves. What a cheating, blinding thing is the world?

Well Sirs; if you will be Chriſtians, count what it muſt coſt you? And if you will be Heirs of Heaven, away with the world: Caſt it out of your hearts: and if your hands muſt yet trade in it, yet trade not for it: Uſe it for God, but enjoy it not for it ſelf. Take your ſelves as ſtrangers here; and look on the world as a deſolate wilderneſs; through which, in the Communion of the militant Saints, you may ſafely travail on to Heaven; but

do not make it your home, nor take it for the ſmalleſt part of your felicity. To be Sanctified without Mortification, is a palpable contradiction. Be at a point with all things below, if you will groundedly hope for the Heavenly Inheritance. But I ſhall purpoſely forbear to enlarge this any further, becauſe I have preached, and written a Treatiſe on this Subject, which I deſire you to peruſe.

DIRECT. VII. My next Direction is this: *If you would be truly Converted, be ſure that you make an abſolute reſignation of your ſelves, and all that you have to God.*

This is the very form, and life of Sanctification. To be Sanctified, is to be ſeparated, in heart, life, and profeſſion, from all other Maſters, and Ends, to God. When the heart that was ſet upon the world, and fleſh, is ſeparated from them, and inclined to God by the power of Love, and devoted to him, to ſerve and pleaſe him; this is indeed a Sanctified Heart: And when the life that before was ſpent in the ſervice of Satan, the world, and the fleſh, is now taken off

off them, and spent, as to the drift, and course of it, in the Service of God, for the Pleasing, and Glorifying of him, from the impulse of Love; this is indeed a *Holy* life. And herein consisteth the very nature of our Sanctity. And when a man doth but *profess* to renounce the Devill, the world, and the flesh, and to give up his heart, and life to God, this is a *Profession* of Holiness. God is both on the title of Creation, Preservation, and Redemption, or absolute Lord or Owner, and we are not our own but his! And therefore we must *give* to God the *things* that are Gods, and Glorifie him in our Souls, and bodies, which are his, 1 *Cor.* 6 19, 20. As we are his Own, so he will have his Own, and be served by his Own: Do not imagine that you have any title to your selves, or propriety in your selves; but without any more adoe, make a full, unreserved, absolute resignation of your selves, of your understandings, and of your wills, of your bodies, and of your names, and of every penny-worth of your estates, to God, from whom, and for whom you have them. Think not that you have power to dispose of your

ſelves, or of any thing that you have. Ask not fleſh and blood, what life you ſhall lead, or what mind or will you ſhall be of: But ask God, to whom you do belong. Ask not your carnal ſelves, what you ſhall do with any of your eſtates, but ask God, and then ask Conſcience, which is the way that God would have me uſe it in, that is, which way may I uſe it to be moſt ſerviceable to God? And that reſolve upon. No ſervice that you do to God, will prove you Sanctified, unleſs you have heartily, and abſolutely given up, and devoted your ſelves to him; and he that gives up himſelf, muſt needs give up all that he hath with himſelf. For he cannot keep it for himſelf (ultimately) when even himſelf is given up to God. Though you be not bound to give all that you have to the poore, nor all to the Church, nor to deny your own bodies, or families their due ſupplies, yet muſt it *all* be given up to God, even that which you make uſe of for your ſelves, and families: For as you are given up to God your ſelves, ſo you muſt feed your ſelves as his, and cloath your ſelves, and your families as his, to fit your ſelves, and

and them for his Service, and not as your own, for the ſatisfying of your fleſh. Thus it is that all comes to be pure to the pure, Sanctified to them that are themſelves firſt Sanctified: becauſe when you feed your ſelfe, you do but feed a Servant of God, that is Conſecrated to him, and ſeparated from things common, and unclean. And even as the Tythes, and Offerings, that were given for the food, and maintenance of the Prieſts, and Levites, were called the *Lords Portion*, and *Holy to the Lord*, becauſe they were *their* portion that were ſeparated to his Altar; Even ſo that which is neceſſary to fit you for Gods Service, while you uſe it to that very end, is *Sanctified* in *your* Sanctification, and is Holy to God; for all his Saints are a Holy Nation, a Royal Prieſthood, to offer up acceptable ſacrifice to him. And thus, *whether you eat, or drink, or what ever you do, you muſt do all to the Glory of God*, 1 Cor. 10. 31. *For Of him, and Through him, and To him are all things, and therefore to him muſt be the Glory for ever*, Rom. 11. 36. God who is the End of your hearts, and lives, muſt be the End of every action of them, unleſs you will ſtep out of the

way of Order, and Safety, and Holineſs. For every action that is not *from* God, and *by* God, and *for* God, is contrary to the nature of true Sanctification. If then you would be Chriſtians indeed, be heartily willing that God ſhould have his own. Underſtand what an excellent honour, and priveledge, and happineſs it is to you to be his. If his Right to you will not move you, let your own neceſſity, and benefit at leaſt move you, to give up your ſelves, and all you have to God. Bring you hearts to the barre, and plead the Cauſe of God with them, and convince them of Gods title to them, and how ſinfully they have robbed him of his own all this while: Have your daies and hours, your wealth and intereſt, been uſed purpoſely for God as his own! O what abundance be there, that in word, and confident profeſſion, do give up themſeves, and all to God, and yet in the Uſe of themſelves, and all, do plainly ſhew that it's no ſuch matter; but they diſſembled with God, and yet never knew ſo much by themſelves. How little do they uſe for God, when they have with ſeeming devotion reſigned all to him? If a Lord, or Knight,

Knight, or Gentleman, of 4000l, or 3000l a year, or 400l, or 300l a year, were to ſhew the accomts of all his expences, how much of all this ſhould you find expended for God, when they have acknowledged that all is his? One would think by their lives, that they look to be ſaved by robbing God, and confeſſing the robbery; by ſaying that *all* is Gods, while they allow him next to nothing.

The devoted, reſigned, Sanctified Soul, hath the true principle of all obedience, and that which will do much to repel all temptations, and carry him through the greateſt ſtraits and tryals. If I am not my own, I need not be over ſolicitous for my ſelf, but may expect that he that oweth me ſhould care for me: Nor do I need to uſe any ſinfull ſhifts for my own preſervation. If I have nothing of my own, what need I to ſinne, for the ſaving of any thing? What need I to venture upon unwarrantable means, to preſerve either credit, or goods, or life? It is *Self*, and *Own*, that are the root of all ſinne, the heart of the old man, and the ſeed of Hell: Nothing elſe is pleaded againſt God, and our Salvation. If the fleſh would have you abuſe

Gods Creatures, you muſt remember they are not your *own*. If the Devil would entice you to ſinne againſt God, either for the Geting, or Keeping of any Creature, it would eaſily repel the temptations, were you but rightly ſenſible, that nothing is your *own*: For God hath no need that you ſhould ſinne, to get *Riches*, or *Honours*, for *him*. If you are called to let go your houſes, or lands, or friends, or lives, or to deliver up you bodies, to the flames, did you but rightly take them as none of your own, how eaſy would it be. You can be content that another man give his goods, or life it ſelf to God, when ever God requireth it: but your *own* you cannot be content to part with; and that becauſe it is your *own*. But if you had rightly reſigned all to God, and took not your ſelves, or any thing for your *own*, but lookt upon your ſelves, and all as Gods, the greateſt works of obedience, or ſuffering, would be much more eaſy to you; and you would have little difficulty, or hindrance in your way. Self-denial is but Sanctification it ſelf; denominated from the wrong End, and Principle, which we forſake. And where ſelf is denied,

and

and dead, what is there left to draw us from God, or stand up against him, in any part of our lives. So much interest as *self* hath in you, so much the world, and the Devil hath in you. And nothing is more proper to a miserable Hypocrite, then deep Reserves of life, or worldly things to themselves, while they seem to give up all to God.

O happy Soul, that is wrought to this sincerity, by the Spirit of Grace! to say unfeinedly, *O Lord I devote, and resign my self wholly unto thee! I am not my own, nor desire any further to be, then to be thine: I have nothing that is my own, nor desire to have any thing that shall not be thine.* Happy and truly wise is that man, that keeps as constant, and faithful a reckoning, how he layes out himself, and all that he hath for God, as a faithfull Steward doth, of his receivings, and layings out for his Masters use. Every penny that is reserved from God, is the fuell of sinne, and a Sacrifice to the Devil, and the flesh; and if it be pardoned to the truly penitent, by the Sacrifice of Christ, that's no thanks to us, that would else have made it the fuel of Hell. God is not so careless of us, or his Mercies,

cies, but that he keeps an exact account of all that we have from him, and will require an account of our improvement of all: Not only requiring his *Own* againe, but his *own* with advantage, *Matth.* 25 27. Why else did he give us such leisure, and ability to improve it? I can never forget what a sinfull thought was once in my mind, which I will venture to confess, because it may possibly be the case of others, that so they may beware. I hearing of some that used to lay by the tenth part of their yearly comings in for charitable uses, I purposed to do so too, and thought it a fair proportion; But since I have perceived what a vile and wicked thought that was, to offer to cut out a scantling for God, or give him a limited share of his *own*, or say that so much he shall have, and no more. Though we cannot say that God must have all in *any one kind of service only*; either *only for the Church*, or *only for the poore*, or *only for publike uses*; yet must we resolve, that in *one way or other* he must have *all*; and the particular proportions to the poore, or Church, or other uses, must be assigned by truly Sanctified prudence, considering which way

way it may be moſt ſerviceable to God. I muſt relieve my owne family, or kindred, if they want: but not becauſe they are *my own*, but becauſe God hath commanded me, and ſo hath made it a part of my obedience: But if I ſee where I may do more ſervice to God, by relieving a ſtranger, and that God doth more require it, I muſt yet preferre them before all the kindred that I have in the world. When the Chriſtian pattern was ſet us by the Primitive Church, *Acts* 2. and 4. They ſold all, and laid down the whole price at the Apoſtles feet, which was not diſtributed to their natural kindred only, but to all the poor Chriſtians, that had no other relation to them, even as every one had need. And as it is the loving of our Spiritual Brethren in Chriſt, that is made the ſign of our tranſlation from death to life, ſo is it the relieving of Chriſt in theſe his Members, that is, the relieving them, *becauſe* they are his Members, that is made the very matter of our Cauſe in the laſt Judgment, and the ground of the ſentence of life, or death, *Matth.* 25. I muſt provide for my own body, and you muſt provide for your children, but that is (as I ſaid before)

before) not as I am my *own*, nor as your children are your *own*; but as I am a Servant of Christ, that must be supported in his Service, or as your selves, and yours, are put under your care, and duty by God. So that I may give it to my self, or others, when I can truly say, I do but use it principally for God, and think that the principal Service I can do him by it: but I may neither take to my self, nor give to any that are neareſt to me, any more then God commandeth, or his Service doth require. When you and yours have your *daily bread*, (which also must be used for him) you must not go to flesh and blood, but to God, to ask which way you shall dispose of the remainder. This is a strange Doctrine to the unsanctified world; but that is because they are unsanctified. And it is a Doctrine that a worldly Hypocrite is loath to believe, and understand; but that is because of Carnality, and Hypocrisie, that alwaies deals with God, like *Ananias* and *Saphira*, lying to the Holy Ghost, and giving God but halfe, (and few so much as half) when they daily confess that all is from him, and should be his, and pretend to be wholly devoted

ted to him. There are few men ſo bad, but will ſpare God ſomething, rather then go to Hell: But indeed this is not to devote it to God, but to uſe it for themſelves, thinking by their Sacrifices, to ſtop the mouth of Juſtice, and to pleaſe God by a part, when they have diſpleaſed him in the reſt. I much fear (and not without apparent cauſe) that abundance among us, that think themſelves Chriſtians, do worſhip, and ſerve God, but as ſome *Indians* are ſaid to offer ſacrifice to the Devil, not for any love they have to him, or his ſervice, but for fear he ſhould hurt them. And there are few Hyporcites but will pretend it is from very love.

O Sirs, it's a greater matter to reſign, and give up your ſelves, and all you have to God, and heartily to quit all claim to your ſelves, and all things, then many a thouſand ſelf-deluding profeſſours do imagine. Many look at this, but as ſome high extraordinary ſtrein of Piety, and the *Papiſts* almoſt appropriate it to a few that live in Monaſtical orders, when indeed the ſincerity of this Reſignation, and Dedication, is the very ſincerity of Sanctification it ſelf.

And let me tell you, that the Unfeigned Convert that attains to this, hath not only pluckt up the Root of ſinne, (though all of us have too many ſtrings of it left) nor only ſtopt up the ſpring of temptation, and got the ſureſt evidence of his uprightneſs, but alſo is got himſelf into the ſafeſt, and moſt comfortable ſtate. For when he hath abſolutely reſigned himſelf, and all to God, how confidently may he expect that God ſhould accept him, and uſe him as his *own*; and how comfortably may he commit himſelf, and his cauſe, and all good affairs to God, as knowing that God cannot be negligent, and careleſs of his *own*. It's an Argument that may make us confident of ſucceſs, when we can ſay as *David*, *Pſal.* 119. 94. *I am thine, ſave me.* Iſa. 63. 19. Even Chriſt himſelf doth ingratiate his Elect with the Father on this account, *Joh.* 17. 6, 9, 10. *Thine they were, and thou gaveſt them me: I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou haſt given me; for they are thine: And all mine are thine, and thine are mine, and I am glorified in them.* And indeed by reſigning all to God, it is the more our *own*; that is, we

have unſpeakably more of the benefit of it, and ſo there is no way to make it our *own*, but by quitting it abſolutely up to God: This is the miſtery that the world will not learn, but God will teach it all that ſhall be ſaved by the Spirit, and by Faith, *Matth.* 16. 24, 25, 26. *Then Jeſus ſaid to his Diſciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himſelf, and take up his Croſs, and follow me: For whoſoever will ſave his life ſhall loſe it, and whoſoever will loſe his life for my ſake ſhall find it.* Me thinks a man that hath time, and ſtrength, and money, ſhould long to be diſburſing all for God, that he might put it in the ſureſt hands, and it may be out of danger; yea that it may be ſet to the moſt honeſt, and profitable uſery. For when God hath it, from the dedication of an upright heart, it is ſure: but till God have it, is in hazzard; and all that *he* hath not is loſt, and worſe then loſt. When it is in our hands, thieves may ſteal it, bad Servants, or unadviſed Children may conſume it, and our own thieviſh fleſh may ſteale it worſt of all, and conſume it on our luſts; or if *our* Children conſume it not, *their* Children may: Or if they ſave it, they may

may loſe it moſt of all, by feeding their pride, and fleſhly minds by it: But if once it be in Gods hands, it is ſafe. You can make no comfortable account of one penny, nor of one hours time, unleſs you can tell God that he had it himſelf; that you uſed it for him: Or that you live to him in the *maine*, and that the reſt is pardoned. O that thoſe Parents underſtood this Doctrine, that had rather ſtrenghten the fetters, and temptations of their Children with it, and help them into that ſtate which few are ſaved in, then to devote and uſe their eſtates for God. Though Chriſt hath told them how hardly the Rich are ſaved, and how few ſuch come to Heaven, yet what care is taken to leave their Children rich; and how little to further the Work of God, or their own accounts, that they may hear the *Well done, good and faithfull ſervant: thou haſt been faithfull over a few things: I will make thee Ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.* Matth. 25. 21, 23.

O Sirs, if you would be good huſbands, and provident indeed for your Souls, ſee that your hearts prove not falſe to you in this, and make no ſecret reſerves

reserves for your selves, but that God have your selves first, and all things with your selves; as Christ first gives himself to you, and all things with himselfe, *Rom.* 8. 32. Never think your hearts right, but when they can readily say, *We are not our own*, 1 Cor. 6. 19. Think not that you come aright to God in any duty, if you do not heartily devote *your selves* to him, and intreat him to accept you, as wholly his, who neither are, nor desire to be your own: and intreat him accordingly to use you for himself. Say not that any thing is your *Own* that you possess, *Acts* 4. 32. In respect to *God*, *and a Communion of Charity*, though it be your *owne* (as a Talent that God doth intrust you with) in respect of *men*, by *a Legal Propriety*.

And then trust God boldly, for you are his *Owne*: Serve him cheerfully, and draw neere him believingly; for you are his *Own*. In poverty, sickness, temptations, and the approach of death, rejoice in him confidently, for you are his *Own*. Into his hands commend your departing Spirits; for they are his *Own*. What reason of distrustfull feares can you

now have? Do you fear lest God will yet hate you? why remember that *no man ever yet hated his own flesh*, Ephes. 5. 29. Nay, for shame, think not the blessed God to be worse then the wicked world: and Christ saith of the world, *Joh.* 15. 19 *If ye were of the world*, the *world would love his own.* And will not God then Love his *Own* do you think? And if you are willing to be his *Own*, Christ is certainly willing that you *should* be his *Own*; and will *Own* all that *Own* not themselves, but *him*. *He calleth his Own sheep by name, and leadeth them out; and when he putteth forth his Own sheep he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice*, Joh. 10. 3. 4. *And* Joh. 13. 1. *Having loved his Own which are in the World, to the End he loved them.*

If you are but truly willing to be his *Own* People, he is certainly willing to be your *Own* Saviour and your *Own* God. Not that you can have such a propriety in him, as he hath in you. But in these *Relations* he will be your *Own*; and Glory, and Help, and Salvation shall be yours. And you may well conclude that *God, even our Own God, shall bless*

us,

us, Psal. 6. 7, 6. There is much comfort may be fetcht from that in *Luke* 15. 31. Though Parables must not be strecht too far: *Sonne thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine.*

And upon this ground it is, that we have the greater encouragement, to believe that God accepteth of our very Infants themselves; because it is his Will that they should be *Devoted, engaged, and dedicated* to him: And that which he would have us dedicate and offer to him, he will surely accept in that Relation to which he would have it offered.

I beseech you therefore Remember what it is to be truly Converted: It is to be called from things common, and unclean, and separated to God: It is to be brought nigh to him, as the Children of his Houshould, that are themselves, and all that they have in his hands: It is to be taken off your *Selves*, and your *Own*, and to lose your selves, and all you have in God, by the most gainfull loss, lest indeed you lose your selves, and all, while you perswade your selves you *save*, or *gain*. It is a taking God in Christ for your *All*, and so being content to have Nothing but him, and for

him. It is a changing of your old Master *self*, for *God* a better Master: and your old work, which was *self-seeking*, and *self-pleasing*, to *self-denial*, and to the seeking, and pleasing of God. See now that this be done, and that your treacherous hearts hide nothing for themselves, as *Rachel* under pretence of necessity, hid her Idols, but say, *Here I am, to be thine, O Lord, and to do thy will.*

More I would have said on this point, but that I have written of it already, in a Sermon on 1 *Cor* 6. 19, 20. Of the Absolute Dominion of Christ, and our self-resignation; which I desire you here to peruse, to set this further home.

DIRECT. VIII. My next Advice that the Work of Conversion may not miscarry, is this: *Take heed, lest you mistake a meer change of your Opinions, and outward profession, and behaviour, for a true Saving change.*

Wicked Opinions must be changed, and so must evil professions, and outward practices: But if no more be changed, you are wicked still. I have great cause

cauſe to feare that this is the moſt common damning deceit, that uſeth to befall profeſſors of Godlineſs, and that it's the caſe of moſt Hypocrites, in the Church. A man may be brought to hold any Truth in Scripture as an Opinion; and ſo far be ſound, and Orthodox; and yet never be indeed a ſound Believer, nor have his Heart poſſeſſed with the life and power of thoſe Sacred Truths. It's one thing to have a mans Opinion changed, and another thing to have his Heart renewed, by the change of his Practical Eſtimation, Reſolutions, and Diſpoſitions. It's one thing to turn from looſe prophane Opinions, to ſtrict Opinions; and to think the Godly are indeed in the right, and that their caſe and way is ſafeſt, and beſt: and it's another thing to be made *One* of them in Newneſs, and Spirituality of heart, and life. A lively Faith differs much from Opinion; and that which is in unſanctified men, which we call *Faith*, and is a kind of Faith indeed, it is but a meer Opinionative Faith: I call it an *Opinionative Faith*, becauſe it differs from Saving Faith, much like as *Opinion* doth from *Knowledg*. Meerly ſpeculative it is not: for ſome intention

of practice there is: But the Practical Intention of such persons, differs from the Predominant Intentions of the Sanctified, even as their *Opiniative Faith* differs from the Saving Faith.

And it is no wonder if there be abundance of these Opiniative believers in the world: For the Truths of God have very great Evidence, especially some of them; and men are yet men, and consequently reasonable Creatures; and therefore have some aptitude to discern the Evidence of Truth: Some Truths will compel Assent even from the unwilling: Many a thousand ungodly men, believe that to be True, which they would not have to be True, if they could help it; because they do not heartily take it to be Good in respect to themselves. Truth as Truth, is the Natural Object of the Understanding; though the same Truth as seeming Evill to them; may be hated by them that are forced to Assent to it. I know that sinne hath much blinded mens Understandings, and that the natural man, Receiveth not the things of the Spirit, because they are foolishness to him, and must *be* spiritually discerned, 1 *Cor.* 2. 14. But though he

cannot

cannot *Savingly* receive them without the *Special* illumination of the Spirit, nor *Opinionatively* receive them without a *common* illumination of the Spirit, yet he may have this Opinionative conviction, and an answerable reformation, by the common Grace of the Spirit, without the Special Grace. An unsanctified man may have something more then Nature in him: And every unregenerate man, is not *meerly*, or *only* Natural. Many are farre convinced, that are farre from being Savingly Converted. I can make you know that you shall die, that you must part with all your wealth, and fleshly pleasures, and divers such Truths, whether you will or not. And one of these Truths doth let in many more, that depend upon them. So that as dark as the minds of natural men are, they yet lie open to many wholsom Truths.

And as the Understanding is thus farre open to Conviction, so the Will it self, which is the Heart of the old man, will farre sooner yield to the changing of your *Opinions* then to the saving chang of Heart, and life. It is not the bare *Opinion*, that your fleshly interest doth fight against, but the Power, and Practice of

Godlineſs is it; and *Opinions* as they lead to theſe. It's one thing to be of *Opinion*, that Converſion is neceſſary, that ſinne *muſt* be forſaken, and God preferred before all the world: And its another thing to be *indeed Converted*, and to *forſake* ſinne, and to *prefer* God before the world. It's a farre eaſier matter to convince a worldling that he *ſhould not* love the world, then to cure him of his worldly love: and to convince a drunkard that he ſhould leave his drunkenneſs, and the whoremonger, that he ſhould abhorre his luſts, then to bring them to do theſe things, which they are convinced of. It will coſt them deer (as the fleſh accounts it) to deny themſelves, and caſt away the ſinne: but it coſteth not ſo deer to take up the *Opinion* that theſe things *ſhould* be done. It will coſt them deer to be downright for God, and practically Religious: but they can take up an Opinion that Godlineſs is the beſt, and neceſſary courſe, at a cheaper rate. Strict *Practices* pinch the fleſh, but ſtrict *Opinions* may ſtand with its *liberty*. O what abundance of our poore neighbours would go to Heaven, that are now in the way to Hell, if an Opinion that Godlineſs

lineſs is the wiſeſt courſe, would ſerve the turn. If inſtead of Converſion God would take up with an *Opinion* that they ought to *turn*; and if inſtead of a Holy, Heavenly life, God would accept of an *Opinion* that ſuch are the happieſt men, that live ſuch a life; and if inſtead of temperance, and meekneſs, and ſelf denial, and forgiving wrongs, God would accept of an *Opinion*, and Confeſſion, that they ſhould be temperate, and meeke, and ſelf-denying, and ſhould forbear others, and forgive them; then O what abundance would be ſaved, that are now in little hope of Salvation! If inſtead of a diligent life of Holineſs, and good works, it would ſerve turn to lie ſtill, and be of a good *Opinion*, that men ſhould ſtrive, and labour for Salvation, and lay out all they have for God, how happy then were our Towns, and Countries, in compariſon of what they are.

I am afraid this deceit will be the undoing of many, that they take a change of their *Opinions* for a true Converſion. Have not ſome of you been formerly of the mind, that the beſt way is to eate, and drink, and be merry, and venture your Souls, and follow your worldly

buſineſs,

businesse, and never trouble your selves with any deep, and searching thoughts about your Spiritual state, or your Salvation? Have you not thought that this diligent godlinesse, is but a needlesse strictnesse, and precisenesse: and have you not since been Convinced of your errour, and perceived, that this is the wisest course, which you before thought to be needlesse, and thereupon have betaken you to the company of the goldy, and set upon a course of outward duties; and now you think that you are made New Creatures, and that *this* is Regeneration, and the work is done? I fear lest this be all the Conversion that many forward professours are acquainted with! But wo to them that have no more.

And because the face of our present times, doth plainly shew the commonness, and prevalency of this disease, and because it is a matter of so great concernment to you, I shall here give you (but as briefly as I well can) some signes by which a true Conversion may be known from this meer Opinionative Change.

1. The true Convert is brought to an unfeigned Hatred of the whole Body of sinne; and especially of those secret, or beloved

beloved sinnes, that did most powerfully captivate him before, 1 *Cor.* 6. 11. *Tit.* 3. 3, 5. *Col.* 3. 3, 5, 7, 8. But the *Opinionative* Convert is still *Carnall*, and unmortified, and inwardly at the heart, the interest of the flesh is habitually predominant. He is not brought to an unreconcileable hatred to the great master sinnes that ruled him, and lay deepest; but only hath eased the top of his stomack, and cropt off some of the branches, of the tree of death. The thornes of worldly desires, and cares, are still rooted in his heart; and therefore no wonder if they choak the seed of wholsome Truth, and there be a greater *Harvest* for the Devil then for God, *Gal.* 5. 24. chap. 16. 19. & 6. 4, 8. *Rom.* 8. 5. *Matth.* 13. 22.

2. Another sign that follows upon this, is, that the sound Convert doth carry on the course of his Obedience, in a way of self-denial, as living in a continual conflict with his own flesh, and expecting his comfort, and Salvation to come in upon the conquest: And therefore he can *suffer* for Christ, as well as be found in cheaper obedience, and he dare not ordinarily refuse the most costly service.

ſervice. For the ſpoiles of his fleſhly deſires are his pray, and Crown of glorying in the Lord, *Luke* 14. 27, 33. *Gal.* 5. 17, 24. 1 *Cor.* 9. 27. *Luke* 9. 23, 24. 2 *Cor.* 12. 9. *Gal.* 6. 14.

But the *Opinionative* Convert ſtill liveth to his carnal-ſelf: and therefore ſecretly, at leaſt, ſeeks himſelf, and layeth hold on preſent things, as the true Convert layeth hold on Eternal Life. The Truths of God being received but into his *Opinion*, do not go deep enough to conquer ſelf, and to take down his great Idol, nor make him go through fire, and water, and to ſerve God with the beſt, and honour him with his ſubſtance, much leſs with his ſufferings, and death: He hath ſomething that he cannot ſpare for God, *Matth.* 13. 21. *Luke* 18. 22, 23, 24.

3. The Sound Convert hath taken God for his Portion, and Heaven for that ſure and full felicity, which he is reſolved to venture upon: That's it that he hath ſet his heart, and hopes upon, and thither tends the drift of his life, *Col.* 3. 1, 2, 3, 4. *Matth.* 6. 20, 21.

But he that is changed only in his *Opinions*, had never ſuch ſure apprehenſions

sions of the life to come: nor so full a confidence in the Promises of God, as to set his heart unfeignedly upon God, and make him truly Heavenly-minded. He may have a Heavenly tongue, but he hath an Earthly heart. A bare *Opinion*, be it never so true, will not raise mens hearts so high, as to make their Affections, and the very design, and business of their lives to be Heavenly, *Phil.* 3. 18, 19, 20. *Rom.* 16, 17, 18. *Rom.* 8. 5.

4. The Sound Convert hath seen the vileness of himself, in the sinfullness of his heart, and life, and the misery thereby deserved; and so is a sincerly humbled, self-accusing man.

But the *Opinionist* is commonly unhumbled, and well conceited of himself, and a self-justifying Pharisee; unless it be that self-accusing will cost him no disgrace, and he take it up as a custom, or that which may bring him into the repute of being humbled, and sincere. For his *Opinion* will not search, and pierce his heart, nor batter down his self-exalting thoughts, nor root up the master sinne of Pride. These are too great works for an *Opinion* to perform. And therefore you

you ſhall hear him more in the excuſing of his ſinne, the magnifying of himſelf, or the ſtiff maintaining of his own conceits, then in unfeigned ſelf-abaſing, *Rom.* 12. 16. 1 *Cor.* 1. 19, 20. & 3. 18. 2 *Cor,* 10. 12. *Luke* 16. 15.

5. The Sound Convert is ſo acquainted with the defects, and ſinnes, and neceſſities of his own Soul, that he is much taken up at home, in his ſtudies, and cares, and cenſures, and his daily worke: The acting, and ſtrengthening of Grace, the ſubduing of corruption, and his daily walk with God, are much of his employment: Above all keeping, he keeps his Heart, as knowing that thence are the iſſues of life. He cannot have while to ſpy out the faults of others, and meddle with their affaires, where duty binds him not, as others can do; becauſe he hath ſo much to do at home, *Gal.* 6. 3, 4. *Prov* 4. 23.

But the *Opinioniſt* is moſt employed abroad, and about meer notions, and *Opinions*, but he is little employed in ſuch heart-ſearching, or heart-obſerving work. His light doth not pierce ſo deep as to ſhew him his heart, and the work that is there to be neceſſarily done.

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As the change is little upon his Heart, so his employment is little there. He is little in bewailing his secret defects, and corruptions; and little in keeping his Souls accounts; and little in secret striving with his heart, to work it into communion with God, and into a Spiritual lively fruitfull frame. He is forward to aggravate the sinnes of others, and oft-times severe enough in censuring them: But he is a very gentle censurer of himself, and a patient man with his own corruptions, and puts the best construction upon all that is his own. He hath much labour perhaps in shaping his *Opinions*; but little for the humbling, and Sanctifying his heart, by the power of the Truth.

6. And as the difference lyeth thus constantly in the *Heart*, so it is usually manifested by the tongue, *Matth.* 12. 34. The Sound Convert is most desirous to discourse of those great, and saving truths, which his very heart hath taken in, and which he hath found to be the seed of God, for his Regeneration, and the Instruments of that Holy, and happy change, that is made upon him: He feeleth most savour, and life in these great, and most Necessary points, which

formed

formed the Image of God upon him: and upon these he daily feeds and lives. Read *Joh.* 17. 3. 1 *Cor.* 15. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6. 1 *Cor.* 2. 2. *Phil.* 3. 8, 9, 10, 11. 1 *Tim.* 3. 16. *Acts* 26. 22, 23. In these Scriptures, you may find what points they were that the greatest Saints did study, and live upon.

But the *Opinionist* is most forward to discourse of meer *Opinions*; and to feed upon the aire of notions, and controversies of lesser moment. For one hours Holy, Heavenly, experimental, heart-searching discourse, that you shall have from him, you shall have many, and many hours discourse of his *Opinions*. I mean it indifferently of all his *Opinions*, whether true or false. For though falshoods cannot be fit food for the Soul, yet Truths themselves, also may be made of little service to them. A man may be a meer Opinionist, that hath *true* Opinions, as well as he that hath false. Almost all the free and zealous discourse of these men, on matters of Religion, is about their several sides, and parties, and Opinions: If they be set upon a point, especially wherein they seem to themselves, to be wiser then others, they have

have a fire of zeale for it in their breſts, that makes them deſirous to be propagating it to others. About the Orders, and Ceremonies of the Church; about the formes of Prayer, and the accidents of worſhip; about Infant Baptiſm, or other ſuch controverſies in Religion, is the freeſt of their diſcourſe.

Yea, you may perceive much of the difference even in the very manner of their conference. A Serious Chriſtian, even when he is neceſſitated to ſpeak of lower controverted points, yet doth it in a Spiritual manner, as one that more favoureth higher Truths, and makes a Holy, and Heavenly life his end, even in theſe lower matters; and deals about ſuch controverſies in a practical manner, and in order to the growth of Holineſs.

But the *Opinioniſts*, even when they ſpeak of the moſt *weighty Truths*, do ſpeak of them but as *Opinions*; and when they diſcourſe of God, of Chriſt, of Grace, of Heaven, it is but as they diſcourſe of a point in Philoſophy, or little better. They go not through the ſhell to the kernel: they look after the *Truth*, but they have but little reliſh of the *Goodneſs*.

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The like may be ſaid of their reading, and hearing of Sermons. The ſound Convert feeleth life, ſpirits in that which is little ſavory to the *Opinioniſt*. It is one thing in a Sermon, or Text that is pleaſant to a true Chriſtian, and another thing uſually that is moſt pleaſant to the Opinioniſt. The true Chriſtian delighteth in, and feedeth on the inward life of Spiritual Doctrine, and the Good which they offer him; that is, indeed, it is upon God, and Chriſt himſelf, that he is feaſting his Soul in reading, and hearing: For this is the Soul of all, without which, letters, and words are but a carcaſs. But the ſuperficial Opinioniſt is much more taken up, either with the Hiſtory, or the Elegancy of Speech, or with the rational light of the diſcourſe, ſtill ſticking in the bark, and ſavouring not Chriſt, and the Father in all. As a man that reads the deeds, or leaſe of his own Lands, delights in one thing; and a clerk that reads the *ſame*, or the like in a book of Preſidents, for his learning, delights in another thing. So is it in this caſe.

7. And hence is follows, that they are ſeveral ſorts of duties, and exerciſes, uſually that theſe ſeveral ſorts of perſons

are

are most addicted to. The sound Convert is most addicted to those Spiritual means, that tend most to the strengthning of his Faith, and warming his heart with the Love of God, and promoting Holiness, and destroying sinne. But the *Opinionist* delighteth most in those means that tend to furnish him with speculative Knowledg, and discourse, and to satisfie his fansie, or curious mind. The sound Convert is much addicted to Prayer, even in secret, and to Heavenly Meditations, and gracious discourse. But the *Opinionist* is much more addicted to reading Histories, or Controversies, or dogmatical Divinity, or Civil, and Political matters. The sound Convert savoureth best those Preachers, and Books, that speak the most weighty, Spiritual Truths, in the most weighty, Spiritual manner, in Power, and Demonstration of the Spirit: But the *Opinionist* relisheth those Preachers, and Books most, that either speak curiously to please the eare, or exactly, and learnedly to please the natural intellect, or that speak for the *Opinions*, or partly that he is addicted to; But others, he hath less mind of.

8. Moreover the ſound Chriſtian layeth out moſt of his *Zeal*, *Affections*, and *Endeavours*, about the great Eſſentials of Religion, and that as I ſaid in a practical manner. But the *Opinioniſt* layeth out his Zeale upon *Opinions*; Right or wrong, it is but as *Opinions*: Of theſe he makes his Religion: For theſe he contendeth: He loveth thoſe beſt, that are of his own *Opinion*, though there be nothing of the ſpecial Image of God upon his Soul, Or if he love a true Chriſtian, it is not ſo much for his Holineſs, and Spirituality, as becauſe he is of his mind in thoſe matters of *Opinion*. Hence it is that he is uſually a bitter cenſurer of thoſe that are not of his *Opinion*, how upright ſoever they may be: His very eſteeme of men, and love to them is partial, and factious, to thoſe that are of his Mind, and Sect: A *Papiſt* will eſteem, and love men of the Popiſh Sect, and an *Anabaptiſt* will eſteem, and love men of that Sect moſt, yea a *Proteſtant*, if he be an *Opinioniſt*; doth eſteem of men, and love them as a Sect: Whereas the true Chriſtian, as he is truly Catholick, and of the Catholick Church, which is not confined to *Papiſts*, no nor *Proteſtants*, ſo he hath

hath truly Catholik affections, and loveth a Christian, as a Christian, a Godly man, as Godly; yea if he saw more serious Godliness in one that is not of his *Opinion* in lesser things, yet would he love him more then one that is in such matters of his *Opinion*, that is ungodly, or of more doubtfull Piety. For as it is God in Christ that he principally loveth, so it is Christ that he admireth in his Members; and so much of Christ as he sees in any, so much are his special affections towards them.

9. Ordinarily the meer *Opinioniſt* will Sacrifice the very Ends of the Gospel, and the honour, and success of the great fundamental Truths of God, to the interest of those *Opinions*, which he hath in a singular manner to his *Own*. He will rather hinder the propagation of the common Truths, and the Conversion of the ignorant, then he will silence his *Opinions*, or suffer them to lose any advantages with the world. Hence it is that we cannot prevaile with the *Papists*, to silence a while the differences between us, and them, till we have taught their ignorant (in *Ireland*, and other barbarous parts) the knowledg of those Truths

that all are agreed in. Nor can we get many *Anabaptists*, or any such Sect, that is engaged in a division, to forbear their *Opinions*, till we have endeavoured to lay the necessary grounds, on which all must build, that will be saved. But though it be apparent to the world, that their disputes, and contentions do exceedingly harden the ignorant, and ungodly against all Religion, and hinder their Conversion, and Salvation, yet will they go on in the unseasonable, intemperate, bruting of their conceits, and will not be perswaded to agree on those terms, for the managing of differences, as most tend to secure the interest of Christ, and his Gospel in the maine. If an *Opinionist* be for the *Truth*, he is usually without much zeale for it, because that Nature doth not befriend the great Spirituall Truths of the Gospel, so much as it doth errours, and private conceits. But if he be of Erroneous *Opinions*, he is usually very zealous for them: For Corrupted Nature, and Self, and Satan, (and the world oft-times) do more befriend these, and furnish him with a Zeale for them, and blow the coale. The counterfeit Angel of Light, is very ordinarily also a spirit

of

of heat, and great activity: not a reviving fire, nor a refining fire, but a consuming fire, devouring Christian Love, and meekness, and patience, and therewith the Church, and Truth of God, so far as it can prevail. For lesser matters, that minister Questions, such men can lay by that which tends to Godly Edifying in Faith, 1 *Tim.* 1. 4. Yea that *Charity*, which is the very End of the Commandement, out of a *pure Heart, a good Conscience*, and *Faith unfeigned*, vers. 5. *From these they swerve, and turn aside to vain jangling: oft times desiring to be Teachers of such things, in which they understand not what they say, nor whereof they speak*, vers. 6, 7. *Consenting not to the wholsome Words of Christ, and the Doctrine which is according to Godliness, they teach otherwise, being proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions, and strife of Words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evill surmisings, perverse disputing of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the Truth*, 1 Tim. 6. 3, 4, 5. Yea they sometime take their *Opinions*, or their worldly gain that they often ayme at, to be instead of Godliness: And think, that to be Godly, is to

be of their mind, and way. They *use to strive about words to no profit, but to the subverting of the hearers, and their vain bablings increase to more ungodliness*, 2 Tim. 2. 14, 16.

But the True Convert looks principally to the main: He loves every known Truth of God; but in their Order, and accordingly to their worth and weight: He will not, for his own *Opinions*, wilfully do that which shall hazard the main, or hinder the Gospel, and the saving of mens Souls. Though he will not be false to any Truth, yet he will avoid *foolish, and unlearned questions, knowing that they do gender strife; and the Servant of the Lord must not strive, but be gentle to all men, and meekly instruct opposers; following Righteousness, Faith, Charity, Peace with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart*, Tim. 2. 22, 23, 24, 25.

10. Lastly, True Converts are stedfast, but Opinionists are usually mutable, and unconstant. The sound Convert receiveth the greatest Truths, and receives the Goodness as well as the Truth; and takes it not only into the Head, but into the Heart, and giveth it deep rooting: He closeth with God as his only felicity, and

and with Chriſt as his only Refuge, and Redeemer, and with Heaven as the ſure everlaſting Glory, to which the world is but a mole-hill, or a dungeon. No wonder then if this *man be ſtedfaſt, and unmovable, alwaies abounding in the Work of the Lord, that knows his Labour is not in vain in the Lord*, 1 Cor. 15. 58.

But the *Opinioniſt*, either faſteneth on ſmaller matters, or elſe holdeth theſe great matters but as bare *Opinions*, and therefore they have no ſuch intereſt in his heart, as to ſtabliſh him againſt ſhaking tryals, and temptations: For two ſorts there are of theſe *Opinioniſts*: the one ſort have no Zeal for their own Opinions; becauſe they are *but* Opinions: And theſe are time-ſervers; and will change as the King, or their Land-lords change; and fit their Opinions to their worldly Ends. The other ſort have a burning Zeale for their Opinions; and theſe uſe to wander from one Opinion to another, not able to reſiſt the ſubtilty of ſeducers; but are taken with fair, and plauſible reaſonings; not able to ſee into the heart of the cauſe. Theſe are as Children toſſed to and fro, and carried about with every

every wind of Doctrine, by the ſlight, and cunning craftineſs of men, whereby they lie in weight to deceive *Eph.* 4. 14. When with great confidence they have held one ſort of Opinions a while, and railed againſt thoſe that were not of their mind, ere long they will themſelves forſake them, and take up another way, and be as confident in that, and take no warning by the experience of their former deceit. And thus they go oft from one *Opinion* to another, till at laſt finding themſelves deceived ſo oft, ſome of them caſt off all Religion, and think there is no certainty to be found in any: Suſpecting Religion, when they ſhould have ſuſpected their falſe hearts: And all this comes to paſs becauſe they never received the Truth in the love of it, that they might be Sanctified, and Saved by it, 2 *Theſ.* 2. 10, 11, 12. Nor ever gave it deep entertainment in their hearts, that it might throughly Convert them; but took it as a bare Opinion into the brain to poliſh their tongues, and outſides, and deceive themſelves as much as others.

And thus I have ſhewed you the difference between a ſound Convert, and an

an Opinionist, or one that hath but a overly superficial Change, that you may see which of these is your own condition.

To return now to my Advice, and Exhortation, I intreat every person, that readeth, or heareth these words, to see that they stick not in an Opinionative Conversion. To which End I further desire you 1. To consider that it is a higher matter, that Christ came into the world for, then to change mens bare Opinions; and it is a higher matter that the Gospel is intended for, and that Ministers are sent to you for: For it is more then a corruption of mens *Opinions*, that sinne hath brought upon you; and therefore it is a deeper disease that must be cured. The Work of Christ by his Gospel, is no less, then to fetch you off all that which flesh and blood accounts your Happiness, and to unite you to himself, and make you Holy, as God is Holy, and to give you a new Nature, and make you as the dwellers, or Citizens of Heaven, while you walk on Earth, *Phil.* 3. 20, 21. And these are greater matters then the changing of a Party, or Opinion.

The

The Holy Ghoſt himſelf muſt dwell in you, and work in you, and imploy your Soul, and life for God, that you may ſtudy him, and love him, and live to him here, and live with him for ever. Do but think well of the Ends, and meaning of the Goſpel, and how much greater matters it drives at, and then you will ſee that there's no taking up with an Opinionative Religiouſneſs.

2. Keep company, if it be poſſible with the moſt Sober, Spiritual, and Heavenly profeſſours, that will be drawing you to the obſervation of your own heart, and life, and opening to you the riches of the Love of Chriſt, and winning up your affections to God, and Heaven: And be not the companions of unexperienced wranglers, that have no other Religion, but a Zeal for their Opinions, and will endeavour rather to make you like Satan, then like God, by poſſeſſing your minds with malice, and bitter thoughts of your brethren, and employing your tongues in reproaches, and vaine ſtrivings, and making you fire-brands in the places where you live: Neither be companions of them that hold the Truth no deeper then Opinion: For though

though some such may be usefull to you in their places, yet if you have not more edifying familiars, your danger will be very great, lest you should let go the life of Religion, and take up with meer notions, and formalities as they.

3. When you have considered, that every Truth of God is a Message to your Hearts, as well as to your Heads, and hath a work of God to do upon them, look after that work; and when you have heard, or read a Truth, go down into your Hearts, and see what it hath done there: And if you find not in your Will, and Resolutions, and Affections, the Image, and fruits of the Truth you have heard, fetch it up again, and ruminate upon it, and do not think you have received it, or done with it, till this be done; yea take it but as lost, and sinfully rejected, if it have not done you some good at the very Heart.

4. Also be sure that you Practise all practical Truths, upon the first opportunity, as soon as you have heard them. Imprison them not in unrighteousness. Cast them not out in forgetfulness; use not a Lecture of Divinity as if it were a lesson of Musick, or a meer Philosophical,

cal, or Historical discourse. Read not the Doctrine of Salvation, and the Promises of Heaven, and the forewarnings of everlasting misery, as you read a common story, or a groundless conjecture in an Almanack: But as a Message from God, which tells you where you must dwell for ever, and as a Direction sent from Heaven to teach you the way thither. Fall to work then, and practise what you know, if you would be Christians indeed. *Be yee doers of the Word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.* For the Opinionative hearer, seeth but a slight appearance of the Truth, as a man that *looketh* on his face in a glass, which he quickly *forgets*: But he that is a Sound Believer, and practiser, and not only an Opinionative *forgetful* hearer, is *the* man that shall be blessed in *his* deed, *Jam.* 1. 22, 23, 24, 25. Opinion without Practise, is building on the *Sand*; but hearing, and sound Believing, and doing, is building upon the *Rock*, where the building will stand after all assaults. *Matth.* 7. 26, 27, 28. An Opinionist doth but seem to be *Religious*, while he keeps his reigning sinnes, and therefore his *Religion* is in vain: but the Practical *Religion*,

Religion, is the pure, and undefiled *Religion*, Jam. 1. 26, 27. Hearty obedience will not only *shew* that your Religion is deeper then meer *Opinion*, but it will also advance it to a greater purity, and root it more deeply then it was before: A man that hath studied the Art of Navigation in his closet, may talk of it, almost as well as he that hath been at sea; but when he comes to practise it, he will find that he is far to seek: But let this man go to sea, and joyn practise, and experience to his Theory, and then he may have a knowledg of the right kind. So if a man that hath only read over Military Books, would be a true Soldier, or a man that hath only studied Physick, would be a true Physician, what better way is there, then to fall to Practise. And so must you, if you would have a Religion that shall save your Souls; and not only a Religion that will furnish you with good *Opinions*, and expressions.

5. Moreover, if you would get above Opinion, be still searching more, and more after the Evidences, of the ancient fundamental Truths, that you have received; and lay open your hearts to the

the power of them. Think it not enough that you take the Christian Religion for true; but labour after a *clearer sight* of its truth. For you may possibly upon some conjecture take it for a Truth, by bare Opinion, whenas the sight of fuller Evidences, and a full sight of those Evidences, might raise you from *Opinion* to a working, saving Faith.

6. Lastly, take heed lest any thing be suffered to keep possession of your Hearts, and so to confine the truth to your braine. When the world is kept up in life, and power, and is neareſt the heart, there is no room for the Word there, but it must float upon the top, and swim in your Opinion; because it can go no deeper, your lusts, and profits having possession before it. The Word can never go to the heart with unmortified men, but by casting your Idols out of your hearts; nor will it take rooting in you, but by rooting out the world.

O Sirs, if you knew the misery of a meer Opinioniſt, you would sure be perswaded now to practise these Directions, that may raise you higher. An Opinioniſt is a deceiver of himself, and oft of others; a troubler of the Church, if he have

have any Zeal for Opinions, and hit (as usually he doth) on the wrong: And when his Religion is right, he is wrong himself, being out of the way, even when he is in the right way, because he is not right in that right way: For he doth but sit down in it, when he should travaile it. A runner shall not win the prize by being in the right way only, unless he make haste. The knowledg of the Opinionist doth but serve to aggravate his sinne, and cause him to be beaten with many stripes; but is not of force to Sanctifie his heart and life, and to save him: *Jam.* 2. fully shews. Stick not therefore in an Opinionative Religiousness.

DIRECT. IX My next Direction that your Conversion may prove sound, is this, *Acquaint your Souls by Faith with the Glory of the Everlasting Kingdom, and see that you make it your Portion, and your End, and from thence let the rest of your endeavours be animated.*

No man can be a sound Christian, that knoweth not the Ends, and Portion of a Christian. There is a great deal of difference between the desires of Heaven in a

Sanctified man and an unſanctified. The Believer prizeth it above earth, and had rather be with God then here (Though death that ſtands in the way, may poſſibly have harder thoughts from him) But to the ungodly there is nothing ſeemeth more deſirable then this world: and therefore he only chooſeth Heaven before Hell, but not before earth; and therefore ſhall not have it upon ſuch a choice. We heare of Gold and Silver mines in the *Indies*: If you offer a Golden mountaine there, to an Engliſh man that hath an eſtate and family here, that are deare to him; perhaps hee'l ſay, *I am uncertain whether their Golden mountains be not meer fictions to deceive men; and if it be true that there are ſuch things, yet it is a great way thither, and the ſeas are perilous; and I am well enough already where I am, and therefore let who will go thither for me, I will ſtay at home as long as I can.* But if this man muſt needs be baniſhed out of *England*, and had his choiſe whether he would go to the Golden Ilands, or to dig in a colepit, or live in a wilderneſs, he would rather chooſe the better then the worſe. So is it with an ungodly mans deſires, in

reſpect

respect to this world, and that to come. If he could stay here, in fleshly pleasure, for ever, he would; because he looks at Heaven as uncertain, and a great way off, and the passage seemeth to him more troublesom, and dangerous then it is; and he is where he would be already: But when he sees that there is no staying here for ever, but death will have him away, he had rather go to Heaven, then to Hell; and therefore will be Religious, as far as the flesh, and the world will give him leave, lest he should be cast into Hell, when he is taken from the Earth.

But take an English man that is in poverty, and reproach, and hath neither house, nor land, nor friend to comfort him, and let him have the offer of a Golden Iland, and a person of unquestionable skilfullness, and fidelity, that will promise in short time to bring him safe thither, if he believe this person, and can put his trust in him, doubtless he will be gone and follow him over sea and land, and though the passage may somewhat daunt him, yet the promised possession will carry him through all. So is it with the true Christian; He is dead to

this world, and ſees nothing here in which he can be happy; he is burdened and wearied with ſinne and ſuffering; he is firmly perſwaded of the truth of the Goſpel, and ſeeth by Faith the world, that is to fleſh inviſible, and believeth in Jeſus Chriſt who hath promiſed to convey him ſafely thither; and therefore he would away; and though he love not death, the ſtormy paſſage, yet he will ſubmit to it, having ſo ſure a Pilot, becauſe he loves the life which through death he muſt paſs into, and had rather be there then here.

Such as a mans principall End is, ſuch is the man, and ſuch is the courſe of his life. He that takes this world for his Portion, and makes the felicity of it his end, is a carnall, worldy, unſanctified man, whatever good and godly actions may come in upon the by. It is he, and only he, that is a ſanctified Believer, who looks on Heaven as his only Portion, and is ſailing through the troubleſome Seas of this world, of purpoſe to come to that deſired harbour; not loving theſe ſeas better then the Land of Reſt, which he is ſailing to; but patiently and painfully paſſing through them,

them, because there is no other way to Glory. As it is the desire of the Land to which he is sailing, that moveth the Marriner or Passenger to do all that he doth in his Voyage; and the desire of his home or journeys End, that moveth the travailer all the way; and the desire of seeing a perfect Building, that moveth the Builder in every stroke of his Work; so it must be the love of God, and the desire after Everlasting blessedness, that must be the very Engine to move the rest of the affections and endeavours of the Saints, and must make men resolve on the necessary labour and patience of Believers. Take off this weight, and all the motions of Christianity will cease. No man will be at labour and sufferings for nothing, if he can avoid them. It is a life of Labour, though sweet to the Spirit, yet tedious to the flesh, which Christianity doth engage us in; and there is much suffering to be undergone; and this to the very last, and to the denyall of our selves; and, if God require it, to the loss of all the comforts of the world: For no less then *forsaking all* that we have, will serve to

make us Christs Disciples. And will any man do this for he knows not what? Will any man forsake all that he hath, unless it be for something better, which may be as sure to him as that he had, and may make him more happy? Look to it therefore that you have right and beliving thoughts of Heaven, and that unfeignedly you take it for your Home and Happiness, and look not for any other Portion. *Till you see so much of the certainty and excellency of Everlasting Glory, as shall prevail with you to lay out your faithfull labour for it, and to be at a point with all this World, as having laid up your Treasure and Hopes in the World to come, you have no ground to conclude that you are true Christian Converts.*

Seeing therefore that it's Heaven that is the very Reason, the End, the Life of all your Religion, it follows that you must necessarily *understand* somewhat of its *excellency*, and *believe* its *certainty*, and accordingly *set your hearts upon it*, and make the attainment of it your daily work, and business in the world: This is to be a Convert indeed.

Remember

Remember therefore firſt what I told you before wherein the nature of this Bleſſedneſs doth conſiſt. I will only name the Eſſentials of it, that your apprehenſions may be right, and forbear to ſay much, as being done already.

1. The firſt thing conſiderable in our Everlaſting Bleſſedneſs, will be our *perſonal Perfection of the whole man*; This is in order to the Perfection of our Everlaſting Operations and Enjoyments. Our bodies ſhall be no more fleſh and blood, nor corruptible, or mortall, or ſubject to hunger or pain, or wearineſs, nor to paſſions that rebell againſt the reaſonable ſoul: but they ſhall be ſpiritul bodies, and Immortall, and Incorruptible and Undefiled. Our Souls will be perfected in their Natural Perfections, and in their Moral. They ſhall be of more advanced Underſtanding, and comprehenſive Wiſdom then now: Our wills ſhall attain to perfect rectitude in a perfect conformity to the Will of God, and every affection ſhall be brought to its perfect order and elevation: All ſinne ſhall be done away, whether it were in the underſtanding,

will, affections, or the actions. The executive power will be anſwerable to the reſt of the Perfections, and to the bleſſed work which it hath to do: And thus we ſhall be like the Angels of God.

2. The next thing conſiderable in our Bleſſedneſs is, our *approximation or approach to God*: We ſhall be admitted into the holieſt, and brought as neer him as our natures are capable of, and we are fit for.

3. Moreover, we ſhall be *Members of the new Jeruſalem*, and receive our Glory in Communion with that bleſſed Society, and ſo as Members contribute to her Glory.

4. And we ſhall *behold the glorified Perſon of our Redeemer*, and he will be glorified on us as the fruits of his Victory.

5. And we ſhall *behold the face of the bleſſed God*, and ſee his wiſdom, and power and glory, and know as we are known. Though we cannot now fully know the manner, yet in that ſenſe as our Angels are ſaid to *behold the face of God*, Mat. 18. 10. we alſo ſhall behold it.

6. We

6. We ſhall alſo *enjoy him in the neereſt relation, and by the moſt raiſed vigorous affections of our ſouls*: We ſhall be filled with his *Love* as full as we can hold, and we ſhall abound with perfect *Love to him* again: And the *Joy* that is in his preſence, which this Intuition and Everlaſting Love will afford us, is ſuch as no heart is here able to conceive.

7. Being thus furniſhed, we ſhall be *employed in his perfect Praiſes*, in ſinging and rejoycing to him with the heavenly Hoſt, and Magnifying his great and holy Name.

8. And in *all this will the Glory of God ſhine forth*, and he will be admired in his Saints, 2 *Theſ.* 1.10, 11. In us it ſhall appear how abundant he is in power, and wiſdom, and goodneſs, in holineſs, faithfulneſs and righteouſneſs.

9. And *God himſelf will be well pleaſed with us, and with the new Jeruſalem and his glorified Sonne, and will take complacency in this manifeſtation and communication of his Glory and of Himſelf unto his creatures.* And this is his Ultimate End, and ſhould be the higheſt point of ours. The Revolution hath now brought all to that Center, which

is

is both the *Alpha* and *Omega*, the beginning and the end. His Will is the Fountain or Efficient of all; and it is the Ultimate End and Perfection of all.

There is no more to add, as to the *matter*, but that as to the *Duration*, first we may take it as that which leaves no room for any addition, that *all this will be Everlasting*, leaving not any doubts, or fears of a cessation. Abundance of glorious adjuncts of this felicity might be mentioned; but I pass them all by, and do but name these few which are the Essentiall Constitutive parts of our Happiness, because I have touched them before, and fullyer spoken of them in the *Saints Rest*. Thus much I thought meet to mention here, that you may have somewhat of that in your eye that I am perswading you to intend and seek; and the rather, because I perceive that many of the godly have not such distinct Apprehensions of the constitutive parts of this Felicity, as they should have; but much wrong their souls, and God Himself, and the Glory of their Profession, by looking but at some of the Parts.

Believe

Believe God ſirs that this is the life that you ſhall live, if you will take it for your Portion, and ſet your hearts upon it, and follow the Conduct of Chriſt for the obtaining it. Can you be content with Heaven alone? Is it enough for you, though you be deſpiſed and perſecuted in the world? Do you account this for Certainty and Excellency to be worth all? Yea, that all is droſs and dung to this. Thus muſt you do if you will be true Converts. For all ſuch are heavenly in their minds, and hearts, and in the drift of all their lives and Converſations.

DIRECT. X. My next Advice that you may prove *ſound Converts*, is this: [*Reſt not, and count not your ſelves truly Converted, till God and his holy Waies have your very Love, and Deſire, and Delight: and take not that for a ſaving Change, when you had rather live a worldly ungodly life, if it were not for the fear of puniſhment.*]

I ſhall ſpeak but little of this, becauſe I toucht upon it before, when I told you that Chriſt muſt have your hearts, and

and becauſe it is but a conſectary of the laſt, or contained in it. But yet I think it beſt to preſent it here diſtinctly to your Conſideration, becauſe a ſlaviſh kind of religiouſneſs, doth deceive ſo many; and becauſe the life of Grace is here expreſt. I deny not but *holy Fear* is exceeding uſefull to us; even a Fear of the Threatnings and Judgments of God. But yet I muſt tell you, that in *Fear* there is much more that is common to the unſanctified, then there is in *Love, Deſire and Delight.* Though the *Fear of God be the beginning of Wiſdom*, it is *Love* that is the *Perfection*: and that *Fear* is not filial, and of the right ſtrain, if *Love* be not its Companion. *Fear* of puniſhment ſhews that you love your *natural ſelves*: but it ſhews not that you *love* God, and are true-hearted to him. The Devils fear and tremble, but they do not *Love.* It is *Love* and and not *Fear* that is the Byas, the Inclination, and, as I may ſay, the *Nature* of the will of man By his Love it is that you muſt know what the man is. The Philoſopher ſaith, [*Such as a man is, ſuch is his end*] which is all one as to ſay, [*Such as a man is, ſuch is his Love.*]

You

You may Fear a thing at the ſame time when you hate it: and it's too *common* to have ſome hatred mixt with Fear. You may be as much againſt God and his holy waies, when Fear only drives you to ſome kind of religiouſneſs, as others are that ſcarce meddle with Religion at all. The firſt thing that God looks at is, what you *would* do; and the next is, what you *do*. If you do it, but had rather leave it undone, you loſe your reward, and God will take it as if you had not done it: For it was not *you* that did it, if you did it not from *Love*; but it was *Fear* that dwelleth in you. God takes mens hearty Deſires and Will, inſtead of the Deed, where they have not power to fulfill it: But he never took the bare *Deed* inſtead of the *Will*. A blockiſh kind of worſhip, conſiſting in outward actions, without the heart, is fit to be given to a wooden god, a ſenſleſs Idol: but the true and living God abhorres it. He is a Spirit, and will be worſhiped in Spirit and in Truth: ſuch worſhipers he ſeeketh, and ſuch he will accept, *Joh.* 4.23,24. A begger will be glad of your Almes, though you leave it with an ill will; becauſe he *needeth* it:

but

but God hath no *need* of you, nor of your ſervice, and therefore think not that he will accept you on ſuch termes. That people worſhipeth God in vain, that draw near him with their mouth, and honour him with their lips, when their *heart* is *farre* from him, *Mat.* 15. 8, 9. A mans heart is where his *Love* is, rather then where his *Fear* is. If you ſhould lie ſtill upon your knees, or in the holy Aſſembly; If you ſhould be the ſtricteſt Obſerver of the Ordinances on the Lords daies; and yet had ſuch hearts in you, as had rather let all theſe alone, if it were not for fear of puniſhment; it will all be diſregarded, and reckoned to you according to your wills, as if it had never been done by you at all. It's Love that muſt win *Love*, or make you fit for *Love* to entertain. If you give your goods to the poor, or your bodies to be burned in a cauſe that in it ſelf is good, and yet have not Love, it availeth nothing, 1 *Cor.* 13. 1, 2, 3, 5. You will not think your Wife hath conjugall affections that loveth another man better then you, and had rather be gone from you, if ſhe could live without you. It's an unnatural Son that loves not his Father,

Father, but had rather be from him, then with him. If God called you to a beſtiall drugery or ſlavery, he would then look but for your work, and not care much whether you be willing or unwilling. If your Ox draw your plow, and your Horſe carry his burden, you care not much whether it be willingly or unwillingly. Or if it be an enemy that you have to deal with, you will look for no more then a forced ſubmiſſion, or that he be diſabled from doing you hurt. But this is not your caſe: It is a ſtate of friendſhip that the Goſpel calls you to: you muſt be nigh to God; his Children; and the Members of his Sonne; eſpouſed to him in the deareſt ſtrongeſt bonds: And do you think it is poſſible that this ſhould be done without your wills and affections? If you can be content with the *Portion* of a *ſlave* and an *enemy*, then do your *task*, and deny God your *affections*: But if you look for the entertainment and Portion of a *Friend*, a Child, a Spouſe; you muſt bring the *heart* of a Friend, and of a Child, and of a Spouſe. Fear may do good by driving you to the uſe of means; and taking out of your hands the things

things by which you would do your ſelves a miſchief: It may *prepare* you for ſaving Grace; and when you are ſanctified, it will prove a neceſſary ſervant of Love; to keep you in awe, and ſave you from temptations. But Love is the ruling affection in the ſanctified; and fear is therefore neceſſary becauſe of the preſent imperfection of Love, and becauſe of the variety of temptations that here beſet us: Think not therefore that you are ſavingly renewed, till God have your very hearts. When you do but believe and tremble, it is better then to be unbelieving, and ſtupid, and ſecure: but you are not true Chriſtians till you believe and Love. We uſe to fly from that which we fear, and therefore do apprehend it to be evil to us. We avoid the preſence and company of thoſe that we are afraid of, but we draw nigh them that we love, and delight in their company. We Fear an Enemy: We Love a Friend: We Fear the Devil naturally; but we do not Love him: It is Love that is that Affection of the ſoul that entertaineth God as God, even as Good: though that Love muſt be accompanied with a filial fear, even a dread

dread and reverence of his Majesty and greatness, and a fear of displeasing him. If you should toile out your selves in Religious duties, with a heart that had rather forbear them, if you durst, you have not the hearts of Gods Children in your breasts. The *Magistrate* can *frighten* men to the Congregation and outward worship: You may lock a man in the Church, that had rather be away: And will any man think that this makes him acceptable to God? You may keep a Thief from stealing by prison and irons; but this makes him not accepted with God as a true man: You may cure a man of cursing, and swearing, and railing, and idle and ribbald talking, even in a minute of an hour, by cutting of his tongue: but will God accept him ever the more as long as he hath a heart that would do it if he could? There's abundance of people at this day that are kept from abusing the Lords day, and from swearing, and stealing, yea and from laying hands on all about them that are godly, and this by the Law of man, and the fear of present punishment: And do you think that these are therefore innocent or acceptable with God?

By this account you may make the Devil a Saint, when he is chained up from doing miſchief: You may as well ſay, that a Lyon is become a Lamb, when he is ſhut up in his Den: Or that a maſtiff Dog is become harmeleſs and gentle, when he is muzled. Believe it ſirs, you are never Chriſtians, till you ſee that in God that winnes your hearts to him, ſo that you would not change your Maſter for any in the world; and till you ſee that in the Hopes of Everlaſting Glory, that you would not change it for any thing elſe that can be imagined by the heart of man; And till you ſee that goodneſs in a heavenly life, that you had rather live it, then any life in the world: You are not converted to God indeed, till you had rather live in Holineſs then in Sinne, if you had your freeſt choice; and till you would gladly be the ſtricteſt holieſt perſons that you know in the world; and long after more and more of it, and fain would reach Perfection it ſelf: For though we cannot be perfect here, yet no man is *upright* that *deſireth* not to be *perfect*. For he that loveth Holineſs as Holineſs, muſt needs love the greateſt

greateſt meaſure of Holineſs, with the greateſt Love. This is it that maketh ſound Converts to be ſo faithfull and conſtant with God: A man is forward and ready to a work that he loves, when he draws back from it, as if it were a miſchief, that hath no mind to do it. A man is hardly kept from the perſons, and places, and employments that he loves: but a little will withdraw him from that which he loveth not. Why is it that we have ſo much adoe to take off a Drunkard from his Companions and his luſts, but becauſe he loves them better then temperance and gracious company? And why can we ſo hardly draw the luſtfull wretch from his filthy luſts, or the glutton, or the idle ſenſuall perſon from his needleſs or ezceſſive recreations, but becauſe they love them? And why is it that you cannot draw the worldling from his covetouſneſs, but he parteth with his money almoſt as hardly as with his blood, but becauſe he loveth it? And therefore what wonder if temptations be reſiſted, and the faireſt baits of the world deſpiſed, by him that is truly in Love with God: No wonder if no-

thing can turn back that man from the way to Heaven, that is in Love both with Heaven and with the Way. No wonder if that man ſtick cloſe to Chriſt and never forſake a holy life, that taſteth the ſweetneſs of it, and feels its to do him good, and had rather go that way then any in the world. There is no true Chriſtian but can ſay with *David*, that *a day in Gods Courts is better then a thouſand, and he had rather be a door-keeper in the houſe of God, then to dwell in the tents,* [yea, or the Pallaces] *of wickedneſs.* Do but mark thoſe Profeſſors that prove Apoſtates, and forſake the way of godlineſs which they ſeemed to embrace, and ſee whether they be not ſuch as either took up ſome bare Opinions and outward Duties, upon a flaſh of ſuperficial illumination, or elſe ſuch as were frightned into a courſe of Religion, and ſo went on from duty to duty for fear of being damned, when all the while their hearts were more another way, and they had rather have been excuſed. Theſe hypocrites are they that are diſputing ſo oft the Obligations to their Duty, and asking, How do you prove that it is a Duty to pray in my Family, or a Duty to obſerve

serve the Lords Day, or to come constantly to the Congregation, or to use the Communion of the godly in private meetings, or to repeat Sermons, or sing Psalms, and the like? Intimating that they are as Birds in a Cage, or Hens in a Pen, that are boaring to get out, and had had rather be at liberty: If it were not for the fear of the Law of God that is upon them, they had rather let all these Duties alone, or take them up but now and then at an idle time, when Satan and the flesh will give them leave. If a Feast be prepared and spread before them, a good stomack will not stand to ask; How can you prove it my duty to eat? but perhaps the sick that loath it, may do so. If the Cup be before the Drunkard, he doth not stand on those termes [How do you prove it my duty now to drink this Cup, and the other Cup] No, if he might have but leave, he would drink on, without any questioning whether it be a duty: If the Gamester, or the Whoremonger, might but be sure that he should scape the punishment, he would never stick at the want of a Precept, and ask, Is it my duty? If there were but a gift of twenty

pound a man, to be given to all the poor of the Town, yea and to all the people in generall, I do not think I should meet with many people in the Town that would draw back and say, What Word of God commandeth me to take it? Or how can you prove that it is my duty? And why is all this? but because they have an inward Love to the thing; and Love will carry a man to that which seemeth good for him, without any command, or threatning. If these ungodly wretches had one sparke of spiritual life within them, and any taste and feeling of the matters that concern their own salvation, instead of asking, How can you prove that I *must* pray with my Family, or that I *must* keep the Lords day, or that I *must* converse with the godly, and live a holy life? they would be readier to say, How can you prove that I *may not* pray with my Family? and that I may not sanctifie the Lords Day? and that I may not have Communion with the Saints in Holiness? Seeing so great a mercy is offered to the world, why may not I partake of it as well as others? I can perceive in many that I converse

converse with, the great difference between a heart that loves God and Holiness, and a heart that seemes religious and honest without such a Love. The true Convert perceiveth so much sweetness in holy Duties, and so much spiritual advantage by them to his soul, that he is loath to be kept back; he cannot spare these Ordinances and Mercies, no more then he can spare the bread from his mouth, or the cloathes from his back; yea, or the skin from his flesh, no nor so much. He loveth them; he cannot live without them; at the worst that ever he is at, he had rather be holy then unholy, and live a godly then a fleshly worldly life. And therefore if he had but a bare leave from God, without a Command, to sanctifie the Lords Day, and to live in the holy Communion of the Saints, he would joyfully take it, with many thanks: For he need not be driven to his rest when he is weary, nor to his spiritual food when he is hungry, nor to Christ the refuge of his soul, when the curse and accuser are pursuing him. But the unsanctified hypocrite, that never loved God or Godliness in his heart, he stands

queſtioning and enquiring for ſome proof of a neceſſity of theſe courſes. And if he can but bring himſelf to hope that God will ſave him without ſo much adoe (which by the help of the Devil he may eaſily be brought to hope,) away then goes the duty: If you could not ſhew him that there is a *Neceſſity* of Family Prayer, and a *Neceſſity* of ſanctifying the Lords Day, and a *Neceſſity* of forſaking his tipling and voluptuouſneſs, and a *Neceſſity* of living a heavenly life, he would quickly reſolve of another courſe: For he had *rather* do otherwiſe, if he durſt. He never was Religious from a true Predominant Love to God and a holy life, but for *fear* of Hell, and for other inferiour reſpects.

Remember this when you have precious opportunities before you, of doing or receiving good, and when you ſee that you have leave to take theſe opportunities, and yet you draw back and are queſtioning; How we can prove it to be your duty; or that you cannot be ſaved without it? Do not theſe Queſtions plainly ſhew that you Love not the work, and Delight not in a holy life;

and

and that you had rather let it alone? Are you not blind if you ſee not this is in your ſelves? Yea, it's plain that you have ſuch an averſneſs or hatred to God and a holy courſe of life, that if you did but know what ſhift to make to ſcape damnation, you would fly away from God and Holineſs, and have as little to do with them as you can. Your Queſtions and Cavils do plainly declare this wicked emnity and backwardneſs of your hearts: and conſequently ſhew how farre you are from true Converſion.

Not that I am of their mind that think there is any Good which the Law of Chriſt Obligeth us not to accept, and which we can refuſe without ſinne and danger to our ſelves: For God doth both draw us, and drive us at once. But when the Threatning and Puniſhment only can prevail with men, and men Love not God and Godlineſs for themſelves, but had rather have liberty to live as the ungodly, I ſhall never take one of theſe for a ſanctified man, nor have any hope of the ſaving of ſuch a ſoul, how farre ſoever his fears may carry him from his outward ſinnes,

or

or to outward duties: Till God ſhall give him a better Converſion then this, I ſay, I have not the ſmalleſt hope of this mans ſalvation. Then you are Gods Children, when the Honour, the Work, the Family, the Name of your Father are lovely and delightfull to you: And when you grieve that there is any remnants of ſin in your ſouls; and when your ſinnes are to you as lameneſs to the lame, that pain them every ſtep they go; and as ſickneſs to the ſick, that makes them groan and groan again, and long to be rid of it: And when you think thoſe the happieſt men on earth that are the moſt holy, and wiſh from your hearts that you were ſuch as they, though you had not a houſe to put your head in: When you look towards God with longing thoughts, and are grieved that your underſtandings can reach no nearer him, and know no more of him, and that your hearts cannot embrace him with a more burning Love: When you admire the beauty of a meek, a patient, a mortified, ſpiritual, heavenly mind, and long to have more of this your ſelf, yea to be perfect in all Holineſs and Obedience: When your

your hearts are thus brought over to God, that you had *rather* have him then any other, and *rather* live in his Family then any where, and *rather* walk in his waies then in any, then are you indeed Converted, and never till then, whatever other dispositions you may have.

And now if that were my business, what abundance of reason might I shew you, to make you willing to come over unto God, with Love, and with Delight. Whom else can you Love, if he that is *Love* it self seem not lovely to you. All loveliness is in *him* and from *him*: The creature hath none of it self, nor for it self: To Love a life of sinne, is to Love the Image and Service of the Devil, and to Love that which feeds the flames of Hell: What is it then to Love this sinne so well, as for the Love of it to fly from God and Godliness? Methinks men at the worst should Love that which will do them good, and not preferre that before it which will hurt them. Do sinners indeed believe that God and Holiness will do them hurt, and that sinne will do them greater good? Is there ever a

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man ſo mad that he dare ſpeak this and ſtand to it? If indeed you think it beſt to live in ſinne, and therefore had rather keep it then leave it, your underſtandings are befooled, I had almoſt uſed *Paul's* Phraſe, and ſaid, *bewitched*, Gal. 3. 1. Will it do you any hurt to leave your beaſtly ſenſual lives, and to live *ſoberly, righteouſly, and godly in the world, denying ungodlineſs and worldly luſts, and looking for the bleſſed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jeſus Chriſt?* This is the Doctrine of Saving Grace, *Tit.* 2. 11, 12, 13. Would it do you any harm to be aſſured of Salvation, and ready to die, and to know that the Angels ſhall Conduct your departing ſouls to Chriſt, and that you ſhall live in Joy with him for ever? Or to be employed in thoſe holy works that muſt prepare you for this day, and help you to this aſſurance. If God be naught for you, if Holineſs, and Righteouſneſs, and Temperance be naught for you, then you may as well ſay, Heaven is naught for you; and therefore you muſt reſolve for ſinne and Hell, and ſee whether that be good for you. I

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ſhall ſay no more of this Point, becauſe I have written of it already, in the Concluſion of the *Saints Reſt*, which I deſire you to peruſe.

DIRECT. XI. The next part of my Advice is, *If you would not have this Saving Work miſcarry, Turn then this preſent day and hour, without any more Delay.*

Somewhat I have ſpoke of this already, and therefore ſhall ſay the leſs. But yet I ſhall back this Direction with ſuch Reaſons as will certainly convince you, if you be not unreaſonable, of the folly of Delay, and ſhew you that it concerneth you preſently to Return. And though my Reaſons will be numerous, it is not the Number but the Strength of them that I ſhall urge you principally to Conſider; and becauſe of the Number, I will go over them with the greater brevity.

1. *Conſider to whom it is that you are commanded to Turn*: and then tell me whether there can be any Reaſon for *delay*. It is not to an empty deceitfull creature, but to the faithfull All-ſufficient God:

God: To him that is the cauſe of all things; the Strength of the Creation; the Joy of Angels; the Felicity of the Saints; the Sun and Shield of all the Righteous; and Refuge of the Diſtreſſed; and the Glory of the whole World. Of ſuch Power, that his Word can take down the Sun from the Firmament, and turn the Earth and all things into nothing; for he doth more in giving them their being and continuance. Of ſuch Wiſdom, that was never guilty of miſtake, and therefore will not miſlead you, nor draw you to any thing that is not for the beſt. Of ſuch Goodneſs, as that evil cannot ſtand in his ſight; and nothing but your evil could make him diſpleaſed with you; and it is from nothing but evil that he calleth you to Turn. It is not to a malitious Enemy, that would do you a miſchief, but it is to a gracious God, that is Love it ſelf: Not to an implacable Juſtice, but to a reconciled Father; not to revenging Indignation, but to the embracement of thoſe Arms, and the Mercy of that compaſſionate Lord, that is enough to melt the hardeſt heart, when you find your ſelf as the poor returning

turning Prodigall, *Luk.* 25.20. in his boſome, when you deſerved to have been under his feet. And will the great and bleſſed God invite thee to his favour, and wilt thou delay and demurre upon the Return? The greateſt of the Angels of Heaven are glad of his favour, and value no Happineſs but the light of his countenance: Heaven and Earth are ſupdorted by him, and nothing can ſtand without him: How glad would thoſe very Devils be of his favour, that tempt thee to neglect his favour: And wilt thou delay to turn to ſuch a God? Why man, thou art every minute at his mercy: If thou turn not, he can throw thee into Hell when he will, more eaſily then I can throw this Book to the ground; And yet doſt thou delay? There are all things imaginable in him to draw thee: There is nothing that is good for thee but it is perfectly in him; where thou maiſt have it certain and perpetuated. There is nothing in him to give the leaſt diſcouragement: Let all the Devils in Hell, and all the Enemies of God on Earth, ſay the worſt they can againſt his Majeſty; and they are not able to find the ſmalleſt blemiſh in his abſolute Holineſs, and Wiſdom,

Wisdom, and Goodness: And yet wilt thou delay to Turn?

2. Consider also, as to *Whom, so to what it is that thou must Turn.* Not to uncleanness, but unto Holiness: not, to the sensual life of a Beast, but to the Noble rationall life of a man, and the more Noble Heavenly life of a Believer: Not to an unprofitable worldly toyl, but to the gainfullest Employment that ever the Sonnes of men were acquainted with: Not to the deceitfull drudgery of sinne, but to that *Godliness which is profitable to all things, having the promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come,* 1 Tim. 4. 8. Sirs, Do you know what a life of Holiness is? You do not know it, if you turn away from it: I am sure if you knew it, you would never fly from it, no nor endure to live without it. Why, a life of Holiness, is nothing but a living unto God: to be conversant with him as the wicked are with the world; and to be devoted to his Service, as sensualists are to the flesh. It is to live in the Love of God and our Redeemer, and in the foretasts of his Everlasting Glory, and of his Love: and in the sweet forethoughts of that blessed life

that

that shall never end: and in the honest self-denying course that leadeth to that blessedness. A godly life, is nothing else but a sowing the Seed of Heaven on Earth; and a learning in the School of Christ, the Songs of praise which we must use before the Throne of God; and by *suffering*, a learning how to Triumph and reign with Christ. And is there any thing in this life which you have cause to be afraid of? The sinnes and weaknesses of the godly are contrary to Godliness; and therefore Godliness is no more dishonoured by them, then health and life is dishonoured by your sicknesses. As health is never the worse to be liked but the better, because of the painfull grievousness of sickness; so Godliness is to be liked the better, because the very failings of the Saints are so grievous. If a true Believer do but step out of the way of God, he is wounded, he is out of joynt, he is as undone till he come in again; though it was but in one particular. And can you endure to continue strangers to it altogether so long. I know you may find faults in the godly, till they are perfect: but let the most malicious Enemy of Christ on Earth find

any fault in Godlineſs if he can.

Can you delay to come into your Fathers Family; into the Vineyard of the Lord; into the Kingdom of God on Earth; to be fellow Citizens of the Saints, and of the Houſhould of God; to have the Pardon of all your ſinnes, and the ſealed Promiſe of Everlaſting Glory? Why Sirs, when you are called on to Turn, you are called to the Porch of Heaven; into the beginning of Salvation: And will you delay to accept Everlaſting life?

3. Conſider alſo *from what you are called to Turn*: and then judg whether there be any reaſon of delay. It is from the Devil your Enemy: from the love of a deceitfull world; from the ſeducement of corrupted bruitiſh fleſh: It is from ſinne the greateſt evil: What is there in ſinne that you ſhould delay to part with it? Is there any good in it? Or what hath it ever done for you, that you ſhould love it? Did it ever do you good? Or did it ever do any man good? It is the deadly enemy of Chriſt and you, that cauſed his death, and will cauſe yours, and is working for your damnation, if con-

converting and pardoning Grace prevent it not: And are you loath to leave it? It is the cause of all the miseries of the world, of all the sorrow that ever did befall you, and the cause of the damnation of them that perish: And do you delay to part with it.

4. Your *Delaying shews that you Love not God, and that you preferre your sinne before him, and that you would never part with it if you might have your will.* For if you loved God, you would long to be restored to his favour, and to be near him, and employed in his service and his Family. Love is quick and diligent, and will not draw back. And it is a sign also that you are in love with sinne: For else why should you be so loath to leave it? He that would not leave his sinne and turn to God, till the next week, or the next Moneth or year, would never turn if he might have his desire. For that which makes you desirous to stay a day or week longer, doth indeed make you loath to turn at all. And therefore it is but hypocrisie to take on you, that you are willing to turn hereafter, if you be not willing to do it now, without delay.

5. Consider *but what a Case you are in while you thus delay.* Do you think you ſtand on drie ground, or in a ſafe condition? If you knew where you are, you would ſit as upon thornes, as long as you are unconverted: you would be as a man that ſtood up to the knees in the Sea, and ſaw the tide coming towards him; who certainly would think that there's no ſtanding ſtill in ſuch a place. Read what I have ſaid of the ſtate of the unconverted, in my firſt Treatiſe of Converſion. In a word, you are the drudges of ſinne, the ſlaves of the Devil, the enemies of God, the abuſers of his Grace and Spirit, the deſpiſers of Chriſt, the heirs of Hell. And is this a ſtate to ſtay in an hour? You have all your ſin unpardoned; you are under the Curſe of the Law; the Wrath of God is upon you; and the fulneſs of it hangs over your heads; Judgment is coming to paſs upon you the dreadfull doom; the Lord is at hand; death is at the door, and waits but for the Word from the mouth of God, that it may arreſt you, and bring you to Everlaſting miſery: And is this a ſtate for a man to ſtay in?

6. Moreover,

6. Moreover, *Your Delaying giveth great advantage to the Tempter.* If you would presently turn and forsake your sinnes, and enter a faithfull Covenant with God, the Devil would be almost out of hope, and the very heart of his temptations would be broken: He would see that now it is too late: there's no getting you out of the arms of Christ. But as long as you delay, you keep him still in heart and hope: He hath time to strengthen his prison and fetters; and to renew his snares; and if one temptation serve not, he hath time to try another, and another: As if you would stand as a mark for Satan to shoot at, as long as he please. What likelihood is there that ever so foolish a sinner should be recovered and saved from his sinne?

7. Moreover, *Your Delaying is a vile abuse of Christ, and the holy Ghost, and may so farre provoke him as to leave you to your self; and then you are past help.* If you delight so to trample on your crucified Lord, and will so long put him to it by your refusing his Grace, and grieving his Spirit; What can you expect but that he should turn away in wrath, and

utterly forsake you, and say, [*Let him keep his sinne, seeing he had rather have it then my Grace: Let him continue ungodly, seeing he is so loath to be sanctified: let him take his own course, and die in his sinne, and repent in Hell, seeing he would not repent on Earth?*] You provoke Christ thus to give you up.

8. Consider also I beseech you, *if you ever mean to turn, What it is that you stay for.* Do you think to bring down Christ and Heaven to lower rates, and to be saved hereafter with less adoe? Sure you cannot be so fooliſh: For God will be still the same; and Christ the same; and his Promise hath still the same Condition, which he will never Change; and Godlineſs will be the same, and as much against your carnall interest hereafter as it is now? When you have lookt about you never so long, you'l never find a fairer or nearer way; but this same way you must go or perish. If you cannot leave sinne now, how should you leave it then: It will be still as sweet to your flesh as now: Or if one sinne grow stale by the decay of nature, another that's worse will spring up in its stead, and though the acts abate, they will

will all live still at the root; for sinne was never mortified by age. So that if ever you will turn, you may best turn now.

9. Yea more then that; *The longer you stay, the harder it will be.* If it be hard to day, it is like to be harder to morrow. For as the Spirit of Christ is like to forsake you for your wilfull delayes, so custom will strengthen sinne: and custom in sinning will harden your hearts, and make you as past feeling, to work all uncleanesse with greedinesse, *Eph.* 4. 19. Cannot you crush this Serpent when it is but in the Spawne; and can you encounter it in its Serpentine strength? Cannot you pluck up a tender Plant, and can you pluck up an Oak or Cedar? O sinners, what do you do, to make your recovery so difficult by delay? You are never like to be fairer for Heaven, and to find Conversion an easier work, then now you may do. Will you stay till the work be ten times harder, and yet do you think it so hard already?

10. Consider also, That *sin gets daily Victories by your delay.* We lay our batteries against it, and preach, and exhort, and pray against it, and it gets a kind of victory

over all, as long as we prevail not with you to turn. It conquereth our perſwaſions and advice: It conquereth all the ſtirrings of your Conſciences: It conquereth all your heartleſs purpoſes, and deceitfull Promiſes. And theſe frequent Conqueſts do ſtrengthen your ſinne, and weaken your reſiſtance, and leave the matter almoſt hopeleſs. Before a Phyſician hath uſed remedies, he hath more hope of a cure, then when he hath tried all means, and finds that the beſt Medicines do no good, but the man is ſtill as bad or worſe. So when all meanes have been tried with you, and yet you are unconverted, the caſe draws towards deſparation it ſelf: The very means are diſabled more then before; that is, your hearts are unapter to be wrought upon by them; When you have long been under Sermons, and Reading, and among good examples, and yet you are unconverted, theſe Ordinances loſe much of their force with you: Cuſtom will make you ſlight them, and be dead-hearted under them. And it is theſe very ſame Means and Truths that you have fruſtrated that muſt do the work, or it will never be done: The ſame Plaiſter muſt heal you, that

you

you have thrown off so oft; And what a sad case is this, that there is no hope left, but in the very same Medicine which you have taken so oft in vain.

11. Moreover, *Age is self hath many inconveniences, and youth hath many great advantages; and therefore it is folly to delay.* In age the understanding and memory grows dull; and people grow uncapable and almost unchangeable. We see by our every daies experience, that men think they should not change when they are old; that opinion or practice that they have been brought up in, they think that they should not then forsake: To learn when they are old, and to turn when they are old, you see how much they are against it. Besides, how unfit is age to be at that paines that youth can undergo? How unfit to begin the holy Warfare against the flesh, the world, and Devil? Gods way is to list his Souldiers as soon as may be; Even in their infancy; which they must own as soon as ever they come to age: And the Devil would not have it done at all; and therefore he would have it put off as long as may be: In infancy he will tell the Parents with the Anabaptists, It is too

too ſoon to be dedicated to God, and entred into his Covenant: when they come to their childhood, and youthfull ſtate, he will then perſwade them that it is yet too ſoon; and when he can no longer perſwade them that it is yet too ſoon, he will then perſwade them that it is too late. O what a happy thing it is to come unto God betimes, and with the firſt. What advantage hath youth? They have the vigour of wit and of body: They be not rooted and hardned in ſinne, nor filled with prejudice and obſtinacy againſt Godlineſs, as others be. Beſides, the capacity of ſerving God, of which anon.

12. *You have ſuch times of advantage and encouragement as few ages of the world have ever ſeen, and few Nations on Earth do enjoy at this day.* What plain and plentifull teaching have you? What abundance of good examples; and the ſociety of the godly; private and publique helpes are common. Godlineſs is under as little ſuffering as ever you can expect to ſee it: yea, it is grown into repu ation among us; ſo that it is an honour to ſerve God, and a diſhonour to neglect it (as well it may) Our Rulers

countenance the Practises of Godliness: they proclaim themselves the forward Professors and Patrons of it, and take this as their Glory. And this is not ordinary in the world. Seldome hath the Church seen such daies on Earth. And *yet* is not the way to Heaven fair enough for you? *Yet* are you not ready to turn to God? When should men make Hay but when the Sun shines? Will you delay till this Harvest time be over, and the Winter of persecution come again? Can you better turn to God, when a godly life is the common scorn of the Countrey, as it was a while agoe? and when every one will be deriding and railing at you? Or when it may possibly cost you your lives? Have you Sun, and winde, and tide to serve you, and will you stay to set out in stormes and darkness.

13 Moreover, *Your delay doth cast your Conversion and Salvation upon hazard; yea upon many and grievous hazzards.* And is your Everlasting happiness a matter to be wilfully hazarded, by causeless and unreasonable delays? 1. If you delay to day, you are utterly uncertain of living till to morrow. If you put

put by this one motion, you know not whether ever you shall have another. Alas, that ever the heart of man should be so senseless, as to delay, when they know not but it may prove their damnation; and when Heaven or Hell must certainly follow; that they dare put off a day or hour, when they know not whether ever they shall see another. 2. And as your life is uncertain, so are the means uncertain, by which God useth to do the work. He may remove your Teachers, and other helps; and then you will be further off then before. 3. And if both should continue, yet Grace it self is uncertain. You know not whether ever the Spirit of God will put another thought of turning into your hearts: Or at least whether he will give you hearts to turn.

14. Moreover, *The delay of Conversion, continueth your sinne, and so you will daily increase the number, and increase your guilt, and make your souls more abundantly miserable.* Are you not deep enough in debt to God already, and have you not yet sinnes enough to answer for upon your Souls? Would you fain have one years sinnes more, or one daies sinnes more

more to be charged upon you? O if you did but know what sinne is, it would amaze you to think what a mountain lyeth already upon your Consciences. One sinne unpardonned will sink the stoutest sinner into Hell: And you have many a thousand upon your Souls already: and would you yet have more. Me thinks you should rather look about you, and bethink you how you may get a pardon for all that's past.

15. And as *sinne increaseth daily by delay, so consequently the Wrath of God increaseth; you will run further into his displeasure*; and possibly you may cut down the bough that you stand upon, and hasten even bodily destruction to your selves. When you live daily upon God, and are kept out of Hell, by a miracle of his mercy, me thinks you should not desire yet longer to provoke him, least he withdraw his Mercy, and let you fall into misery.

16. And do but consider, what *will become of you, if you be found in these delaies.* You are then lost body and Soul for ever. Now if you had but hearts to know what is good for you, the worst of you might be converted, and saved:

for

for God doth freely offer you his Grace. But if you die in your delaies, in the twink of an eye you will find your ſelves utterly undone for ever. Now there is hope of a change: but when delays have brought you to Hell, there is no more change, nor no more hope.

17. Conſider, that your *very time which you loſe by theſe delaies, is an inconceivable loſs.* When time is gone, what would you then give for one of thoſe years, or daies, or hours, which now you fooliſhly trifle away. O wretched ſinners; are their ſo many thouſand Souls in Hell, that would give a world if they had it, for one of your daies; and yet can you afford to throw them away, in worldlineſs, and ſenſuality, and loitering delaies. I tell you, Time is better worth, then all the wealth and honours of the world. The day is coming when you will ſet by time: When it is gone you will know what a bleſſing you made light of. But then all the world cannot call back one day or hour of this precious time, which you can ſacrifice now to the ſervice of your fleſh, and caſt away on unprofitable ſinning.

18. Conſider alſo that *God hath given you*

you no time to spare. He hath not lent you one day or hour, more then is needfull for the work that you have to do: and therefore you have no reason to lose any by your delaies. Do you imagine that God would give a man an hours time for nothing; much less, for to abuse him, and serve his enimy. No, let me tell you, that if you make your best of every hour; if you should never lose a minute of your lives, you would find all little enough for the work you have to do. I know not how others think of time, but for my part I am forced daily to say, *How swift, how short is time? and how great is our work; and when we have done our best, how slowly goeth it on.* O precious time! what hearts have they, what lives do those men lead, that think time long? that have time to spare, and pass in idleness.

19. To convince you more; consider I beseech you *the exceeding greatness of the work you have to do*; and tell me then whether it be time for you to delay. Especially you that are yet unconverted, and strangers to the heavenly nature of the Saints; you have far more to do then other men. You have a multitude of head-

head-ſtrong paſſions to ſubdue, and abundance of deadly ſinnes to kill; and rooted vices to root up: You have many a falſe opinion of God, and his waies, to be plucked up; and the cuſtomes of many years ſtanding to be broken: You have blind minds that muſt be enlightned with heavenly kowledg; and abundance of Spiritual Truths, that are above the reach of fleſh and blood, that you muſt needs learn and underſtand: You have much to know, that is hard to be known, You have a dead Soul to be made alive, and a hard heart to be melted; and a ſeared Conſcience to be ſoftned, and made tender; and the guilt of many thouſand ſinnes to be pardoned: You have a new heart to get, and a new End to ayme at, and ſeek after, and a new life to live: abundance of Enemies you have to fight with and overcome: abundance of temptations to reſiſt and conquer. Many Graces to get, and preſerve, and exerciſe, and increaſe: and abundance of holy works, to do for the Service of God, and the good of your ſelves, and others. O what a deal of work doth every one of theſe words conteine! and yet what abundance more might I name! And have

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you all this to do, and yet will you delay? And they are not indifferent matters that are before you: It is no less then the saving of your Souls; and the obtaining the blessed Glory of the Saints. Necessity is upon you: These are things that *Must* be done, or else *wo* to you that ever you were born: And yet have you another day to lose! Why Sirs, if you had a hundred mile to go, in a day or two, upon paine of death; would you delay? O think of the work that you have to do, and then judg whether it be not time to stirre.

20. And me thinks it should exceedingly terrifie you to consider, *What abundance by such Delayes do perish: and how few that wilfully delay are ever convert·d, and saved.* Many a Soul that once had purposes hereafter to repent, is now in the misery, where there is no Repentance, that will do them any good. For my part, though I have known some very few Converted when they were old; yet I must needs say, both that they were very few indeed, and that I had reason to believe, that they were such that had sinned before in ignorance, and did not wilfully put off Repentance, when

they were convinced that they must turn. Though I doubt not but God may convert even these if he please, yet I cannot say that I have ever known many, if any such to be converted. Sure I am that Gods usual time is in Child-hood, or youth, before they have long abused grace, and wilfully delaid to turn when they were convinced. Some considerable time I confess many have before their first convictions, and purposes be brought to any great ripeness of performance: but O how dangerous is it to delay,

21. Consider also; *Either Conversion is Good, or Bad for you: Either it is needfull, or unnecessary. If it be bad, and a needless thing, then let it alone for altogether? But if you are convinced that it is Good, and necessary, is it not better now then to stay any longer?* Is it not the sooner the better? Are you afraid of being safe, or happy too soon. If you are sick, you care not how soon you are well: If you have a bone out, you care not how soon it is set: If you fall into the water, you care not how soon you get out: If your house be on fire, you care not how soon it be quenched: If you are but in fears by any doubts, or

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ill tidings, you care not how soon your fears be over. And yet are you afraid of being to soon out of the power of the Devil, and the danger of Hell; and of being too soon the Sons of God, and the holy, justified heirs of Heaven.

22. Consider also: *Either you can turn now, or not. If you can, and yet will not, you are utterly without excuse. If you cannot to day, how much less will you be able hereafter*; when strength is less, and difficulties greater, and burdens more. Is it not time therefore to make out to Christ for strength; and should not the very sense of your disability dissuade you from delay?

23. Consider *how long you have staid already*, and put Gods Patience to it by your folly: Hath not the Devil, the world, and the flesh, had many years time of your life already? Have you not long enough been swallowing the poison of sinne? and long enough been abusing the Lord that made you, and the blood of the Sonne of God, that was shed for you, and the Spirit of Grace, that hath moved and perswaded with you? Are you not yet gone far enough from God? and have you not yet done enough to the

damning of your ſelves, and caſting away Everlaſting Life. O wretched ſinners; it is rather time for you, to fall down on your faces before the Lord, and with tears and groans, to lament it, day and night, that ever you have gone ſo far in ſinne, and delayed ſo long to turn to him as you have done. Sure if after ſo many years rebellion, you are yet ſo far from lamenting it, that you had rather have more of it, and had rather hold on a little longer, no wonder if God forſake you, and let you alone.

24. *Have you any hopes of Gods acceptance, and your Salvation, or not? If you have ſuch hopes*, that when you turn, God will pardon all your ſinnes, and give you Everlaſting Life: is it think you *an ingenious thing to deſire to offend him yet a little longer*, from whom you expect ſuch exceeding Mercy, and Glory as you do? Have you the faces to ſpeak out what is in your hearts, and practice; and to go to God with ſuch words as theſe; *Lord I know I cannot have the pardon of one ſinne, without the Blood of Chriſt, and the riches of thy Mercy: Nor can I be ſaved from Hell without it: But yet I hope for all this from thy Grace: I beſeech*

such thee let me live a little longer in my sinnes; a little longer let me trample on the Blood of Christ, and despise thy commands, and abuse thy Mercies; a little longer let me spit in the face of thy Goodness, and prefer the flesh, and the World before thee, and then pardon me all that ever I did, and take me into Glory. Could you for shame put up such a request to God as this? If you could, you are past shame: If not, then do not practise and desire that, which you cannot for shame speak out and request.

25. Moreover, *it is an exceeding advantage to you, to come in to God betimes, and an exceeding loss, that you will suffer by delay*, if you were sure to be converted at the last. If you speedily come in, you may have time to learn, and get more understanding in the matters of God, then else can be expected: For knowledg will not be had but by time, and study. You may also have time to get strength of Grace, when young beginners can expect no more then an infant strength: You may grow to be men of parts and abilities, to be usefull in the Church, and profitable to those about you, when others cannot go or

ſtand, unleſs they lean on the ſtronger for ſupport. If you come in betime, you may do God a great deale of ſervice; which in the evening of the day, you will neither have ſtrength, nor time to do. You may have time to get Aſſurance of Salvation, and to be ready with comfort when death ſhall call: When a weakling is like to be perplexed with doubts, and fears, and death is like to be terrible, becauſe of their unreadineſs.

26. And *did you ever conſider, who and how many do ſtay for you while you delay?* Do you know who it is that you make to waite your leiſure. *God himſelf* ſtands over you with the offers of his Mercy, as if he thought it long till you return, ſaying, *O that there were ſuch a heart in them! and when will it once be? How long ye ſimple will you love ſimplicity, and ſcorners delight in ſcorning, and fools hate knowledg? Turn you at my reproof.* Deut. 5 29. Jer. 13. 17. Prov. 1. 22. And do you think it wiſe, or ſafe, or mannerly for you to make the God of Heaven to wait on you, while you are ſerving his Enimy? Can you offer God a baſer indignity, then to expect that he ſhould ſupport your lives, and feed you,

you, and preſerve you, and patiently forbeare you, while you abuſe him to his face, and drudg for the fleſh, the world, and the Devil? Should a worm thus uſe the Lord that made him? You will not your ſelves hold a candle in your hands, while it burns your own fingers; nor will you hold a nettle, or a waſp in your hand to ſting you; nor will you keep a dog in your houſe, that is good for nothing but to ſnarl at you, and bite your Children, or worry your ſheep: And yet God hath long held up your lives, while in ſtead of Light, you have yielded nothing but a ſtinking ſnuff; and inſtead of graps you have brought forth nothing but thorns and thiſtles; and while you have ſnarled at his Children, and his Flock, and done the worſt you could againſt him. And would you indeed put God to wait on you thus, while you ſerve the Devil yet one day more. Muſt God as it were hold the drunkard the candle while he reeles and ſpues? Muſt he draw the curtain, while the filthy wretch doth once more pleaſe his fleſhly luſts? Marvaile not, if he withdraw his ſupporting Mercy, and let ſuch wretches drop into Hell.

And it is not God only, but his *Servants, and Creatures, and Ordinances*, that all are waiting on you. The Angels ſtay for the joy that is due to them upon your Converſion. Miniſters are ſtudying, and preaching, and praying for you. Godly neighbours are praying, and longing for your change. The Springs, and rivers are flowing for you: The winds blow for you: The Sunne ſhines for you: The clouds raine for you: The Earth bears fruit for you: The beaſts muſt labour, and ſuffer, and die for you: All things are doing, and would you ſtand ſtill? or elſe do worſe. What haſt makes the Sunne about the world, to return in its time to give you light? What haſt make other Creatures in your ſervice? And yet muſt you delay. Muſt God ſtay, and Chriſt, and the Spirit ſtay; Muſt Angels ſtay, muſt Miniſters ſtay, muſt the Godly ſtay, and the Ordinances ſtay, and all the Creatures ſtay your leaſure, while you are abuſing God, and your Souls, and others, and while you delay, as if it were too ſoon to turn?

27. Conſider, that *when you were loſt, the Sonne of God did not delay the work*

work of your Redemption. He presently undertook it, and turned by the stroak of damning Justice. In the fulnes of time he came and performed what he undertook: he failed not one day of his appointed time. And will you now *Delay* to accept the benefit, and turn to him? Must he make such hast to save you at so dear a rate, and now will you delay to be saved.

28. Moreover, *God doth not delay to do you good*: You have the day and night in their proper seasons: The Sunne doth not faile to rise upon you at the appointed time: You have the Spring, and Harvest in their meetest seasons: the former and latter raine in season. When you are in want you have seasonable supplies: and when your are in danger, you have seasonable deliverance: And is it meet or equal that you should refuse to bring forth seasonable fruit, but still be putting off God with your delaies?

29. Moreover, *When you are in trouble and necessity, you are then in hast for deliverance, and relief.* Then you think every day a week till your danger or suffering be past. If you be under the pain of a disease, or in danger of death, or

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under poverty, or oppreſſion, or diſgrace, you would have God relieve you without delay: And yet you will not turn to him without delay. Then you are ready to cry out, *How long, Lord, how long* till deliverance come: but you will not hear God, when he cryeth to you in your ſinnes, *How long will it be ere you turn from your tranſgreſſions: when ſhall it once be?* When you are to receive any outward deliverance, you care not how ſoon; the ſooner the better: but when you are to turn to God, and receive his Grace, and title to Glory, then you care not how late, as if you had no mind of it. Can you for ſhame beg of God to haſten your deliverances, when you remember your delaies, and ſtill continue to trifle with him, and draw back?

30. Your *preſent proſperity, and worldly delights are poſting away without Delay:* and ſhould you delay to make ſure of better in their ſtead? Time is going; and health is going; youth is going: yea life is going: your riches are taking wing: your fleſhly pleaſures do periſh in the very uſing: Your meat, and drink is ſweet to you little longer then

then it is in your throat. Shortly you muſt part with houſe, and lands, with goods, and friends, and all your mirth, and earthly buſineſs will be done. All this you know; and yet will you delay to lay up a durable treaſure which you may truſt upon, and to provide you a better tenement before you be turned out of this? What will you do for a habitation, for pleaſures and contents, when all that you have now is ſpent and gone, and Earth will afford you nothing but a grave? If you could but *keep that you have*, I ſhould not much wonder, that knowing ſo little of God, and another world, you look not much after it: But when you perceive death knocking at your doores, and ſee that all your worldly comforts are packing up, and haſting away, me thinks, if you have your wits and ſenſe about you, you ſhould preſently turn, and make ſure of Heaven, without any more delay.

31. Conſider alſo *whether it be equal, that you ſhould delay your Converſion, when you can ſeaſonably diſpatch your worldly buſineſs, and when your fleſh would be provided for, you can hearken to it without Delay.* You have wit enough to ſow your

your ſeed in ſeaſon, and will not delay it till the time of harveſt: You will reap your corn when it is ripe, and gather your fruit when it is ripe, without delay. You obſerve the ſeaſons in the courſe of your labours, day by day, and year by year: You will not lie in bed when you ſhould be at your work, nor delay all night to go to your reſt; nor ſuffer your ſervants to delay your buſineſs: You will know your dinner time, and ſupper time day by day: If you be ſick you will ſeek help without delay, leſt your diſeaſe ſhould grow to be uncurable. And yet will you delay your Converſion, and the making ſure of Heaven? Why Sirs, ſhall theſe trifles be done without delay, and ſhall your Salvation be put off? In the Name of God Sirs what do you think of? Do you imagine that you can better ſuffer Hell-fire, then hunger, or nakedneſs? Or that you can better bear the loſs of Everlaſting Joyes, then the loſs of your commodities, and proviſions in the world. Sure if you believe the life to come, you cannot think ſo. And can you have while for every thing, except that one thing, which all the reſt are meerly to promote?

and

and in comparison of which they are all but dreams? Can you have while to work, to plow, and sow, and reap, and cannot you have while to prepare for Eternal Life? Why Sirs, if you cannot find time yet to search your hearts, and turn to God, and prepare for death; give over eating, and drinking, and sleeping, and say, you cannot have time for these. You may as wisely say so for these smaller matters, as the greater.

32. Moreover; *if men offer you courtesies, and commodities for your bodies, you will not stand Delaying, and need so many perswasions to accept them.* If your Landlord would for nothing renew your lease; if any man would give you houses, or lands, would you delay so long before you would accept them? A beggar at your doore will not only thankfully take your almes, without your intreaty, and importunity, but will beg for it, and be importunate with you to give it. And yet will you Delay to accept the blessed offers of Grace, which is a greater thing?

33. Ye Consider, that *it is God that is the Giver, and you that are the miserable beggars, and receivers: And therefore*

fore it is fitter that you ſhould wait on God and call on him for his Grace, when he ſeemeth to delay, and not that he ſhould waite on you. He can live without your receiving, but you cannot live without his giving. The beggar muſt be glad of an alms at any time; and the condemned perſon, of a pardon at any time: but the giver may well expect that his gift be received without delay, or elſe he may let them go without it.

34. And me thinks you *ſhould not deal worſe with God*, when he comes to you as a Phyſician to ſave your own Souls, *then you would do with a neighbour, or a friend, when it is not for your own good, but for theirs.* If your neighbour lay a dying, you would go and viſit him without delay: If he fell down in a ſwoon, you would catch him up without delay: If he fell into the fire, or water, you would pluck him out without delay: Yea you would do thus much by a very beaſt. And yet will you delay when it is not another, but your ſelves, that are ſinking, and drowning, and within a ſtep of death, and deſparation? If a woman be but in travaile, her neighbours will come to her without delay:

And

And yet when their own Souls are in bondage to ſinne, and Satan, and a ſtate of death, they will let them lie there, year after year, and when we deſire them to be Converted, here's nothing but delaies.

35. If yet you perceive not how unreaſonably you deale with God, and your Souls, I beſeech you conſider *whether you do not deal worſe with him, then you do with the Devil himſelf.* If Satan or his ſervants perſwade you to ſinne, you delay not ſo long, but you are preſently at it: You are ready to follow every tipling companion, or gameſter that puts up the finger. You are as ready to go, as they to invite you: The very ſight of the cup doth preſently prevaile with the drunkard: and the ſight of his filthy mate prevaileth with the fornicatour; and ſinne can be preſently entertained without delay. But when God comes, when Chriſt calls, when the Spirit moveth, when the miniſter perſwadeth, when Conſcience is convinced, we can have nothing after all, but wiſhes, and purpoſes, and promiſes, with Delaies. O what a ſtomack hath that man, or what a brain, that will ſnatch at poyſon,

ſon, and ſwallow dung and dirt with greedineſs, without any chewing; and when you offer him meat, ſtands ſighing, and looking on it, and hardly will be perſwaded to put it in his mouth: and if he do, he is chewing it ſo long, that at laſt he even ſpits it out againe, and cannot get it down. Thus deal ungodly wretches, between their poiſonous ſins, and the ſaving means, and Grace of Chriſt.

Nay more then this, ſo eager are they on their ſinne, that we are not able to intreat them to delay it. When the paſſionate man is but provoked, we cannot perſwade him to delay his rayling language, ſo long as to conſider firſt of the iſſue. We cannot intreat the drunkard to put off his drunkenneſs but for one twelve-month, while he tryeth another courſe: All the miniſters in the Country cannot perſwade the worldling to forbear his worſdlineſs, and the proud perſons their pride, and the ungodly perſon his ungodlineſs, for the ſpace of one moneth, or week, or day. And yet when God hath a command, and a requeſt to them, to Turn to him, and be ſaved, here they can Delay without our intreaty.

36. Con-

36. Consider also that *it is not possible for you to turn too soon; nor will you ever have cause to repent of your speediness.* Delay may undoe you: but speedy turning can do you no harm: I wonder what hurt you think it can do you, to be quickly reconciled to God. And why then should there be any Delay, where it is not possible to be too hasty. Do you think that there is ever a Saint in Heaven, yea or on Earth either, that is sorry that he stayed not longer unconverted? No: you shall never hear of such a repentance from the mouth of any that is indeed converted.

37. But I must tell you on the contrary side, that if *ever you be so happy as to be Converted, you will Repent it, and an hundred times Repent it, that you delayed so long before you yielded.* O how it will grieve you when your hearts are melted with the Love of God, and are overcome with the infinite kindness of his pardoning, saving Grace; that ever you had the hearts to abuse such a God, and deal so unkindly with him, and stand out so long against that compassion that was seeking your Salvation? O how it will grieve your hearts to consider, that you

have ſpent ſo much of your lives in ſinne, for the Devil, and the fleſh, and the deceitfull world. O you will think with your ſelves; was not God more worthy of my youthfull daies? Had I not been better have ſpent it in his Service, and the work of my Salvation? Alas, that I ſhould waſt ſuch precious daies, and now be ſo farre behind hand as I am! Now I want that Faith, that Hope, that Love, that Peace, that Aſſurance, that Joy in the Holy Ghoſt, which I might have had if I had ſpent thoſe years for God, which I ſpent in the ſervice of the world, and the fleſh. Then I might have had the comfort of a well ſpent life, and with joy have now lookt back upon thoſe daies, and ſeen the good I had done to others, and the honour I had brought to God: whereas I muſt now look back upon all thoſe years with ſorrow, and ſhame, and anguiſh of mind. You will think to your ſelves then a hundred times, O that I had but that time againe to ſpend for God, which I ſpent for ſinne! and to uſe for my Soul, which I waſted for my bruitiſh fleſh. Believe it, Sirs, if ever you be converted, you muſt look for theſe Repenting ſorrows for all your

Delaies.

Delaies. (and that is the best that can come of it) And who would now wilfully make work for sorrow?

38. And I pray you consider, *Whether it belongs of right to God or you, to determine of the day and hour of your coming in?* It is he that must give you the pardon of your sinnes; and doth it not then belong to him to appoint the time of your receiving it? You cannot have Christ, and life without him: It is he that must give you the Kingdom of Heaven: And is he not worthy then to appoint the time of your Conversion, that you may be made partakers of it? But if he say, *To day*, dare you say, *I'l stay till to morrow.*

30. Nay consider, *whether God or you be likelier to know the meetest time.* Dare you say that you know better when to turn, then God doth. I suppose you dare not: And if you dare not say so; for shame let not your practice say so. God saith, *To day, while it is called to day, hear my voice, and harden not your hearts.* And dare you say, *It's better stay one moneth longer, or one day longer.* God saith, *Behold this is the accepted time: behold this is the day of Salvation.*

2 Cor. 6. 2. And will you ſay, It's time enough to morrow? Do you know better then God? If your Phyſician do but tell you in a pluriſie, or a feaver, you muſt let blood this day before to morrow; you will have ſo much reaſon as to ſubmit to his underſtanding, and think that he knows better then you: And cannot you allow as much to the God of Wiſdom?

4o. Conſider alſo, that the *ſpeedineſs of your Converſion when God firſt calls you, doth make you the more welcome, and is a thing exceeding pleaſing to God.* Our Proverb is, *A ſpeedy gift is a double gift:* If you ask any thing of a friend, and he give it you preſently, and cheerfully at the firſt asking, you will think you have it with a good will: but if he ſtand long delaying firſt and demurring upon it, you will think you have it with an ill will, and that you owe him the ſmaller thanks. If a very beggar at your doore muſt ſtay long for an alms, he will think he is the leſs beholden to you. How much more may God be diſpleaſed, when he muſt ſtay ſo long for his own, and that for your benefit? God loveth a cheerfull giver; and conſequently a cheerfull

full Obeyer of his call: And if it be hearty and chearfull, it is the liker to be speedy, without such delaies.

41. And I would desire you *but to do with God as you would be done by.* Would you take it well of your Children if they should tear all their cloaths, and cast their meat to the doggs, and tread it in the dirt, and when you intreat them to give over, they will not regard you? Would you stand month after month, intreating and waiting on them, as God doth on you, in a foolisher course? Or rather would you not either soundly whip them, or take their meat from them, till hunger teach them to use it better? If your servant will spend the whole day and year, in drinking and playing, when he should do your work, will you wait on him all the year with intreaties, and pay him at last, as if he had served you? And can you expect that God should deal so by you?

42 And consider I pray you, that *your Delay is a Denial*, and so may God interpret it. For the *Time of your Turning*, is part of the *Command*. He that saith *Turn*, saith *Now*, even *To day*, without delay. He giveth you no longer

day: If time be lengthned, and the offer made again and again, that's more then he promised you, or you could have promised your selves. His Command is, *Now Return and Live.* And if you refuse the *Time*, the *Present Time*, you refuse the offer, and forfeit the benefit. And if you knew but what it is, to give God a denial in such a case as this, and what a case you were in if he should turn away in wrath, and never come neer you more, you would then be afraid of jesting with his hot displeasure, or dallying with the Lord.

43. And me thinks you should remember, that *God doth not stay thus on all as he doth on you.* Thousands are under burning and despaire, and past all remedy, while patience is waiting yet upon you. Can you forget that others are in Hell at this very hour, for as small sinnes as those that you are yet intangled, and linger in? Good Lord, what a thing is a sensless heart? That at the same time when millions are in misery, for delaying or refusing to be Converted, their successours should fearlesly venture in their steps. Surely if Faith had but opened your ears, to hear the cries of those damned

damned Souls, you durst not imitate them by your Delaies.

44. And I must tell you, that *God will not alwaies thus wait on you*; and attend you by his patience, as hitherto he hath done. Patience hath his appointed time. And if you outstay that time, you are miserable wretches. I can assure you Sirs, the glass is turned upon you; and when it is runne out, you shall never have an hour of patience more: Then God will no more intreate you to be converted. He will not alwaies stand over you with Salvation, and say, O that this sinner would Repent and live! O that he would take the Mercies that I have provided for him! Do not expect that God should do thus alwaies with you: for it will not be.

45. *Your Delaies do weary the Servants of Christ, that are employed for your recovery.* Ministers will grow weary of preaching to you, and perswading you: When we come to men that were never warned before, we come in hopes, that they will hear and obey: and this hope puts life, and earnestness into our perswasions: But when we have perswaded men but a few times in vaine, and leave

them as we found them, our ſpirits begin to droop and flag: Much more when we have preached and perſwaded you many years, and ſtill you are the ſame, and are but where you were: This dulls a Miniſters ſpirit, and makes him preach heavily and coldly, when he is almoſt out of heart and hope. I do not juſtifie Miniſters in this, and ſay, they *ſhould* do thus: I know they *ſhould not*; and if they were perfect they *would not*: but they are but men, and imperfect themſelves: and what man is able to be as lively and fervent in his work, when people ſtir not, and he ſees no good done on the miſerable hearers, as if he had the encouragement of ſucceſs? O when we do but ſee the hearts of hardned, ſtubborn ſinners reſent, and break, and melt before the power of the Word, and when we hear them cry out for Chriſt and Mercy, and cry out againſt themſelves for their former folly, and confeſs their ſinnes, and ask us what they ſhall do to be ſaved? and are but willing to be ruled by Chriſt the Phyſician of their Souls; this would put life into a Preacher that was cold and dull; this would even make a ſtone to ſpeak. But when we tell men

of

of Gods threatnings till they are paſt believing them, and tell you of Gods Anger till they ſeem to be paſt fearing it, and tell them of the plague of ſinne, till they are paſt feeling; when in ſtead of preaching men to Faith, and Repentance, and fear, and tenderneſs of heart, we preach them into greater unbelief and careleſneſs, and dead ſtupidity, this is enough to dull or break the heart of almoſt any Preacher in the world: What man is able to follow ſo fruitleſs a work with livelineſs? And then it's you that will have the loſs, and danger of it: When you have dried the breſts, the child may famiſh: If your Preachers could not awake, and change you with all their convincing arguments, and fervency, how quietly may you ſleep on when you have flatted them by diſcouragements: If Satan can either diſmount, or make uſeleſs theſe Cannons, that were wont to batter his garriſon, he may then poſſeſs you Souls in peace. You talk againſt perſecutors that ſilenced Miniſters: But O Sirs, it is you that are our greateſt perſecutours, that refuſe and delay to yield to the calls of Chriſt by our Miniſtry, and make us labour ſo much in vaine:

vaine: Though it be not in vaine as to our own Souls, yet you make it in vaine as to yours: When we have ſtudied till we almoſt break our braines, and preached till we have quite broke our ſtrength, and we are conſumed, and worn away with labour, and bodily paines that it procureth, then you come after, and make us requital by breaking our hearts, by your delaies, and refuſing to turn and live. Truly Sirs, I muſt tell you for my own part, that if it had not been for thoſe that gave me better encouragment by their obedience, I ſhould never have held out with you a quarter of this time: If all had profited as little as ſome, and all had ſtuck as faſt in an unconverted ſtate as ſome; if the humble penitent, obedient ones among you, had not been my comfort, and encouragment under Chriſt, I had been gone from you many a year ago; I could never have held out till now: either my corruption would have made me runne away with *Jonas*; or my judgment would have commanded me to ſhake the duſt of my feet, as a witneſs againſt you, and depart: But to what end do I ſpeak all this to you? To what end? Why? to let you

ſee

ſee how you abuſe both God and man, by your Delaies and diſobedience. You cannot poſſibly do us that are your Teachers, a greater injurie or miſchief in the world. It is not in your power to wrong us more. Are our ſtudies, and our labours worth nothing, think you? Are our watchings and waiting, worth nothing? Are our Praiers, and tears, and groanes to be deſpiſed? God will not deſpiſe them if you do: Believe it, he will ſet them all on your ſcore, and you will one day have a heavy reconing of them, and pay full deare for them. Is it equal dealing with us, that when we are watching for your Souls, as men that know we muſt give an account, you ſhould rob us of our comfort, and make us do it with ſighes and ſorrow? *Heb.* 13. 17. Yea that you ſhould undo all that we are doing, and make us loſe our labour and our hopes: And yet do you not think to pay for this? I tell you again, unconverted ſinners, we are wearied with your delaies: Many years we have been perſwading you but to Turn and live, and yet you are unturned: You have been convinced long, and thinking on it, and wiſhing long, and talking of

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it, and promiſing long, and yet it is undone, and here is nothing but delaies. We ſee while you delay, death takes away one this week, and another the next week, and you are paſſing into another world apaſe; and yet thoſe that are left behind will take no warning, but ſtill delay: We ſee that Satan delaies not while you delay: He is day and night at work againſt you: if he ſeem to make a truce with you, it is that he may be doing ſecretly while you ſuſpect him not: We ſee that ſinne delaieth not while you delay: It is working like poyſon, or infection in your bodies, and ſeazing upon your vital powers; it's every day blinding you more and more; it's hardening your hearts more, and ſearing up your Conſciences, to bring you paſt all feeling and hope: And muſt we ſtand by, and ſee this miſerable work with our peoples Souls, and all be fruſtrate, and rejected by themſelves, that we do for their deliverance? How long muſt we ſtand by with the light in our hands, while you are ſerving the fleſh, and neglecting that which we are ſent to call you to? It is not our buſineſs to hold you the candle to play by, or to ſleep by,

or

or to ſinne by: theſe are works that better agree with the dark: But God ſent us to you on another meſſage; even to Light you out of your ſinnes to him, that you might be ſaved. Truly beloved hearers, I muſt needs ſay, that the time ſeems long, and very long to me, that I have been preaching ſo many yeares to you for Converſion, and for an Holy, Heavenly life, even ſince I firſt knew you, and that yet ſo many of you are drown'd in ſinne, and ignorance, and are unconverted; when I think your very Conſciences tell you that it is a thing that muſt be done: I tell you all theſe years do ſeem to me a long time to wait on you in vain: Bleſſed be the Lord that it hath not been in vaine with ſome; or elſe I would ſcarce preach any more then one other Sermon to you, even to bid you farewel. I pray you deal but fairly with us, and tell us whether ever you will turn or not: If you will not, but are reſolved for ſinne and Hell, ſay ſo that we may know the worſt; ſpeak out your minds, that we may know what to truſt to: For if we once knew you would not turn, we would ſoon have done with you, and leave you to the Juſtice of God. But if

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ſtill you ſay, *you will turn, When will you do it?* You *will* do it, and you *hope* you ſhall, but when? How long would you have us wait yet? Have you not abuſed us enough? Nay I muſt tell you, that you even weary God himſelf. It is his own expreſſion, *Mal.* 2. 17. *Iſa.* 43. 24. *Thou haſt wearied me with thine iniquities*, Iſa. 1. 14. And I muſt ſay to you as the Prophet, *Iſa.* 7. 13. *Is it a ſmall thing for you to weary men, but you will weary my God alſo?* Conſider what it is that you do.

46. Conſider alſo that *you are at a conſtant unſpeakable loſs every day and hour that you Delay your Converſion.* O little do you know what you deprive your ſelves of every day. If a ſlave in the Gallies, or priſon, might live at Court as a favourite of the Prince, in honour, and delight, and eaſe, would he delay either years, or hours? Or would he not rather think with himſelf, *Is it not better to be at enſe, and in honour, then to be here.* As the Prodigal ſaid, *How many hired ſervants of my fathers have bread enough and to ſpare, and I periſh with hunger?* All the while I might be in plenty, and delight. All the while

that

that you live in sinne, you might be in the favour of God; in the high and Heavenly employments of the Saints; you might have the comforts of daily Communion with Christ, and with the Saints; you might be laying up for another world, and might look death in the face, with Faith and confidence, as one that cannot be conquered by it; you might live as the Heirs of Heaven on Earth: All this and more then this, you lose by your delaies: All the Mercies of God are lost upon you: Your food and rayment, you health and wealth, which you set so much by, all is but lost and worse then lost, for they turn to your greater hurt: All our pains with you; and all the Ordinances of God which you possess; and all your time, is lost and worse. And do you think it indeed a wise mans part to live any longer at such a loss as this, and that wilfully and for nothing? If you knew your loss, you would not think so.

47. Nay more, *you are all this while doing that which must be undone againe, or you will be undone for ever.* You are running from God; but you must come back again or perish when all is done. You

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are learning an hundred carnal leſſons, and falſe conceits, that muſt be all unlearnt again: You are ſhutting up your eies in wilful ignorance; which muſt be opened again: You muſt lean the Doctrine of Chriſt, the great Teacher of the Church, if you ſtay never ſo long, or elſe you ſhall be cut of from his people, *Acts* 3. 22. & 7. 37. When you have been long accuſtoming your ſelves to ſinne, you muſt unlearn, and break all thoſe cuſtomes again: You are hardning your hearts daily, and they muſt again be ſoftned. And I muſt tell you that though a little time, and labour may ſerve to do miſchief, yet it is not quickly undone again. You may ſooner ſet your houſe on fire, than quench it when you have done. You may ſooner cut and wound your bodies, then heal them again: And ſooner catch a cold, or a diſeaſe, then cure it: You may quickly do that which muſt be longer a undoing. Beſides; the cure is accompanied with paine: You muſt take many a bitter draught, in groanes or tears of godly ſorrow, for theſe delaies: The wounds that you are now giving your Souls, muſt ſmart, and ſmart again, before they are

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ſearcht and healed to the bottom. And what man of wiſdom would make himſelf ſuch work and ſorrow. Who would travail on an hour longer, that knowes he is out of his way, and muſt come back again? Would you not think him a mad man that would ſay, I will go on a little further, and then I will turn back?

I know *Mr. Bilney* the Martyr was offended with this compariſon, becauſe he thought it was againſt Free Grace. But compariſons extend not to every reſpect: There are two things in your ſins to be undone: the one is the Guilt, and the other is the Habit and power of ſin: the firſt indeed is done away, when you are Converted: but at the coſt of Chriſt, which ſhould not be made light of: And yet ſome ſcarres may be left behind, and ſuch twigs of Gods Rod may fall upon you as ſhall make you wiſh you had come ſooner in. And for the habit of ſinne, though Converſion break the heart of it, yet will it live and trouble you while you live: and thoſe ſinnes that now you are ſtrengthning by your delaies, will be thorns in your ſides, and rebels in your Country, and find you work as long as you live. And thus I may well ſay that

you are doing that while you delay, that must be long in undoing, and will not be undone so easily as it is done; and you are going on that way, that must be all trod backward.

48. And me thinks if it were but this, it should terrifie you from your Delaies; that it *is likely to make your Conversion more grievous, if you should have so great Merey from God, as after all to be Converted.* There is very *few scape* that are so exceeding long in travaile: but if you come to the birth, it's like to be with double paine. For God must send either some grievous affliction to fire and frighten you out of your sinnes, or else some terrible gripes of Conscience, that shall make you groane, and groane againe, in the feeling of your folly. The pangs and throws of Conscience, in the work of Conversion, are far more grievous in some then in others. Some are even on the wrack, and almost brought besides their wits, and the next step to desperation, with horror of Soul, and the sense of the Wrath of God; so that they lie in doubts and complaints many a year together; and think that they are even forsaken of God. And to Delay your Conversion,

version, is the way to draw on either this or worse.

49. Consider also, that *Delaies are contrary to the very nature of the work, and the nature of your Souls themselves.* If indeed you ever mean to turn, it is a work of haste, and violence, and diligence that you must needs set upon: *You must strive to enter in, for the gate is strait, the way is narrow that leads to life, and few there be that find it. Many shall seek to enter, and shall not be able*, Luke 33.24, 25. *When once the master of the house is risen up, and hath shut to the doore, and ye begin to stand without, and knock at the doore, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us, he shall answer, I know you not whence you are: depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity*, vers. 27. It is a race that you are to run, and Heaven is the prize. *And you know that they which run in a race, run all: but one receiveth the prize: and therefore you must so run, as that you may win and obtain*, 1 Cor. 9. 24, 25. And what is more contrary to this then Delay? You are Souldiers in fight, and your Salvation lieth on the victory: and will you trifle in such a case, when death or life is even at hand? You

are travailers to another world, and will you ſtay till the day is almoſt paſt, before you will begin your journey? Chriſtianity is a work of that infinite conſequence, and requireth ſuch ſpeedy, and vigorous diſpatch, that Delay is more unreaſonable in this then in any thing in all the world.

And beſides, your Souls are Spirits, of an excellent active nature; that will not be kept idle: and therefore Delay is unſuitable to their excellencie. The beſt and nobleſt creatures are moſt active: The baſeſt are moſt dull, and unfit for action: The earth will ſtand ſtill: You may eaſily keep clods and ſtones from moving: But fire and winds that are purer things, and the Sunne, and ſuch nobler ſublimer creatures, you are not able to keep idle for an hour. Who can cauſe the Sunne to delay its *Courſe*? or who can ſtay the aſcending flames? And therefore to your more excellent immortall Souls, and that in a work that muſt needs be done, how exceeding unſuitable are Delaies?

50. If all this will not ſerve turn, let me tell you, that *while you are Delaying, your Judgment doth not delay*; and that when

when it comes, these Delaies will multiply your misery, and the remembrance of them, will be your Everlasting torment. What ever you are thinking of, or what ever you are doing, your dreadfull doom is drawing on apace; and misery will overtake you, before you are aware. When you are in the Ale-house little thinking of damnation, even then is your damnation coming in haste: when you are drown'd in the pleasures, or cares of the world, your judgment is still hasteing. *You* may delay, but *it* will not delay. It is the saying of the Holy Ghost, 2 *Pet.* 2. 3. *Whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbreth not.* You may slumber, and that so carelesly that we cannot awake you: but your damnation slumbreth not, nor hath not done of a long time, while you thought it slumbred; and when it comes, it will awaken you. As a man that is in a coach on the road, or a boat on the water, what ever he is speaking, or thinking, or doing, he is still going on, and hastening to his journeies end, or going down the stream: So what ever you think, or speak, or do, whether you believe it, or mock at it,

whether you sleep or wake, whether you remember it or forget it, you are hastening to damnation, and you are every day a day neerer to it then before: and it is but a little while till you shall feel it. *Behold the Judg standeth before the doore*, Jam. 5. 9. The Holy Ghost hath told you, *The Lord is at hand*, Phil. 4. 5. *The day is at hand; the time is at hand; the end of all things is at hand*, Rom. 13. 12. Rev. 22. 10. 1 Pet. 4. 7. *Behold*, saith the Lord, *I come quickly, and my reward is with me, to give to every man according as his work shall be*, Rev. 22. 12. And do you as it were see the Judge approaching, and damnation hasting on, and yet will you delay?

And withall consider, that when it comes, it will be most sore to such as you: and then what thoughts do you think you shall have of these Delaies? You are unable to conceive how it will torment your Consciences, when you see that all your hopes are gone, to think what you have brought your selves to, by your trifling: To feel your selves in remedilesse misery, and remember how long the Remedy was offered you, and you Delaied to use it, till it was too late.

To

To see that you are for ever shut out of Heaven, and remember that you might have had it as well as others; but you lost it by Delay. Oh then it will come with horrour into your mind, *How oft was I perswaded, and told of this? how oft had I inward motions to return? how oft was I purposed to be holy, and to give up my heart and life to God? I was even ready to have yeelded; but I still delaied, and now it is too late.* Then you shall pay for all our warnings, and all the Sermons and motions which you lost.

And now having laid you down no less then fifty moving Considerations, if it be possible to save you from these Delaies, I conclude with this Request to you whoever you be that read these words; that you would but consider of all these Reasons, and then entertaine them as they deserve. There is not one of them that you are able to gainsay; much less all of them. If after the reading of all these, you can yet believe that you have reason to delay, your understandings are forsaken of God: But if you are forced to confess that you should not Delay, what will you do then? Will you obey God, and your

own Conſciences, or will you not? Will you Turn this hour without delay? Take heed of denying it, leſt you have never ſuch a motion more: You know not, but God that calls you to it, may be reſolved, that it ſhould be *now or never.* I do beſeech you, yea as his meſſenger I charge you in his Name, that you Delay not an hour longer, but preſently be reſolved, and make an unchangeable Covenant with God; and as ever you would have favour in that day of your diſtreſs, delay not now to accept his favour, in the day of your viſitation. O what a bleſſed family were that, which upon the Reading of this, would preſently ſay, *We have done exceeding fooliſhly in Delaying ſo great a matter ſo long: Let us agree together to give up our ſelves to God without any more Delay. This ſhall be the day: We'l ſtay no longer. The fleſh, and the World, and the Devil, have had too much already: It's a Wonder of patience that hath borne with us ſo long: We will abuſe the patience of God no longer; but begin to be abſolutely his this day.* If this may be the effect of theſe exhortations, you ſhall have the everlaſting bleſſing: But if ſtill you Delay, I hope I

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am free from the guilt of your blood.

DIRECT. XII. The laſt Direction that I ſhall give you, for preventing your miſcarriage in the work of Converſion is this: *Stop not in weak and wavering Purpoſes, and faint attempts: but ſee that you be groundedly, unreſervedly, and habitually* (or firmly) *Reſolved.*

There are many good thoughts, and meanings in the Soul, before *Reſolution*: but you are not truly Converted, till you are *Reſolved*, and thus *Reſolved* as is here expreſt. Here I ſhall ſhew you, 1. What this *Reſolution* is. 2. Why it is ſo neceſſary: and 3. I ſhall urge you to reſolve: and 4. I ſhall Direct you in it.

1. *Reſolution is the firm or prevalent Determination of the Will upon Deliberation,*

In opening this Definition, I ſhall firſt ſhew you how we are led up to Reſolution by Deliberation: and 2. What is this Determination of the will.

There are ſeveral ſteps, by which the will doth riſe up to *Reſolution*, which I ſhall ſet before you. And firſt it is preſuppoſed

ſuppoſed that in the ſtate of corrupted Nature, the Soul is *unreſolved* for God, if not (in many that are exceeding wicked) *Reſolved againſt* him. At firſt the ſinner doth either *Reſolve* to be as he is, or elſe he hath no *Reſolution* to Return. But God breaks many a wicked *Reſolution*, or elſe woe to the ungodly; for there were no hope. Many wicked wretches, have not only neglected their Souls; but alſo Reſolved that they would never lead a Holy life, nor never joyn themſelves to the Communion of Saints, nor never leave their drunken company, or be ſo preciſe, and make ſo great a matter of ſinne, as the Godly do. When we urge them with the plaineſt Words of God, and the moſt unqueſtionable Reaſons, ſo that they have not a word of ſenſe to ſpeak againſt it. When we have told them of the Command of God, and told them of the certain danger of their Souls, they will plainly tell us that they are *Reſolved* never to be ſo preciſe: When they have nothing elſe to ſay, but nonſence, they will put us off with this, that they are *Reſolved* to venture their Souls without ſo much adoe. But as Reſolute as they are, God will break and chang their

their *Resolution*, and make them as much Resolved of the clean contrary, if ever he will save them. For woe to them that ever they were born, if he should take them at their word, and Resolve as they Resolve!

Now in this case there are many degrees that men go through, before they come to be *Resolved* for God.

1. The first thing usually that befalleth such a Soul, is some further *Light*, which shews him that which before he understood not. 2. This Light causeth him to begin to *Doubt*, whether all be so well with him as he thought it had been; and whether he were so wise in his former Resolutions as he thought himself. 3. When Light hath bred these Doubtings in his mind, these Doubtings breed some *Fears* within him, and he begins to be a little awakened. Lest evil be neerer him then he was aware of, and lest the threatenings of God, and his Ministers should prove true. 4. These *Fears* do drive him to *Consider* of the matter, and to *Deliberate* what he is best to do: To consider whether these things be so or not, and what course he must take if they should prove true. 5. Though sometimes

times God may bleſs the very firſt Conſiderations to be the preſent means of true converſion, yet that is no uſual thing; but ordinarily the firſt Conſiderations do help the mind to ſome ſlight convictions, ſo that the man begins to ſee a great deal more then he did before; and ſo much as puts him now paſt doubt that he was before miſtaken, and out of the way. 6. Finding himſelf, in this caſe, his fears increaſe, and his grief comes on for his former folly, and he finds himſelf in a miſerable caſe, and at a loſs for a Remedy. 7. By this much he is quickened to a purpoſe or reſolution, to hearken to thoſe that can inſtruct him, and enquire of them that he thinks are in the right, and to uſe ſuch means as he is acquainted with, to find out what he muſt do to be ſaved. And accordingly he goes among good company, and begins to hear more diligently, and ſenſibly, and to mark, and regard what he hears, and reads; and alſo to cry to God in Prayer for mercy and relief. But all this is but from the Natural Fears of miſery, awakened in him by Common preparing Grace. 8. In the uſe of theſe Means of Grace, he begins better to underſtand,

and

and relish the Doctrine of Redemption by Jesus Christ, and the nature and necessity of true Sanctification by the Holy Ghost. And though sometime these Evangelical Illuminations may be special saving works at the very first, yet it's more usual, especially with us that are bred up under the Gospel, to have a more superficial common Illumination, before the saving Light come in. And by this common Light, men have at first but a general glimmering, and confused Knowledg of a Saviour, and of Redemption, and of Mercy to be had by him. And sometime they have a distinct Knowledg of *some parts only* of the Christian Faith; and sometime a *distinct* Knowledg, and belief of *every Article*; but only *superficial*, and not savingly effectual. 9. By this general, or superficial Knowledg of Christ, and Mercy, a kind of Hope ariseth in the heart, that yet there is a possibility of escape: and a kind of comfort answerable to this Hope. 10. These Hopes are accompanied with some *Desires* to understand yet more of the Mistery of the Gospel; and to be made partakers of the saving Mercy of which he hath had a confused light.

11. And

11. And hereupon there is further kindled in the will, a Purpose, or Resolution to go further on in learning, and enquiring into the Will of God, and using his means: And 12. This purpose is performed, and means are further used. And thus far the Soul is but in Preparation, and under the common workes of Grace, and possibly may fall off and perish. The first degree may be so stifled, that it shall not reach unto the second; or the second so stifled that it shall not reach unto the third: But the most common stop is at the third degree: when men are a little frightened, they will not follow it on to Consideration: And they that follow Consideration diligently, do usually speed well, and get through all the rest.

But when the Soul is brought thus farre, if God will save it, he next proceeds to this much more: 1. He giveth a clearer Light into the Soul, which giveth a more distinct, or at least a more piercing, convincing, deep and savoury apprehension of the essentials of Christianity then he ever had before.

& Where note of this special Heavenly light, 1. The *being*, usually the Consequent of a more common knowledg, therefore

therefore moſt ordinarily the ſum of Chriſtian Doctrine is in ſome manner known before. 2. That it doth not reveal only ſome one point of Faith alone, and then another, and ſo on: as if we ſavingly knew one eſſential point of Faith, when we have no ſaving Knowledg of the reſt: For that is a Contradiction. But finding all theſe Truths received in the mind before by a common Knowledg, the ſpecial Light comes in upon them all at once; and ſo ſhews us the Anatomy of Chriſtianity, or the parts of Gods Image in one frame, as to the eſſentials. 3. For the underſtanding of which you muſt further know, that there is ſuch an inſeparable connection of theſe Truths, and ſuch a dependance of one upon another, that it is not poſſible to know one of them truly, and not know all. For example, Believing in Jeſus Chriſt, is an act ſo inſeparable from the reſt, that (if the eſſentials of Chriſtianity be not eſſential to it) certainly you cannot do this without them. For to Believe in Chriſt, is eſſentially to believe in him as God and man, two Natures in one Perſon, by Office the Mediator, our Redeemer and Saviour, to

ſave

save us from guilt and sinne, from punishment, and pollution, and to give us by the Holy Ghost, a Holy nature and life, and to give us the forgiveness of sinne, and Everlasting life, and so to restore us to the mutual Love of God here, and fruition of him hereafter: and all this as merited and procured by his Death, Obedience, Resurrection, Ascension, and Intercession for his Church. Whether here be all that is Essential to Christianity, and absolutely necessary to Salvation to be believed, I leave to consideration; but sure I am that all this is Essential to saving Justifying Faith. And Christ is not taken as Christ, if he be not thus taken: For the Ends thus enter the definition of his Relation as the Redeemer, and Saviour, and Lord.

So that the Love of God as our felicity and End, and the belief in Christ, as the way, are both together in the same minute of time, which soever of them be first in order of nature: (which is a question that I dare not here so unseasonably handle)

2. Upon this special Illumination of the Soul, and the special Consideration with which it doth concurre; the Deliberating

rating Soul is preſently Reſolved. And in theſe two Acts which alwaies go together, conſiſteth the ſpecial Sanctifying Work: Even in the *Illumination*, and *Eſtimation* of the Underſtanding, and in the true *Reſolution* of the Will.

2. The Determination of the Will, is its own free act, performed by its natural ſelf determining power, procured by the ſpecial Grace of God (I mean in this ſpecial caſe) It followeth Deliberation. While we are unreſolved, we Deliberate what to Reſolve upon; that is, we are conſidering which is beſt and moſt eligible, and which not; and as we practically judg, we uſe to Determine, and to chooſe. And when this choice after Deliberation is peremtory and full, it's called Reſolution.

So that my meaning is to let you underſtand, that when the Matter of our Faith is ſet open to the Soul, it is not a wavering fickle purpoſe, that is a ſaving cloſure with it, but it muſt be a *firm Reſolution*. Much leſs will it ever bring a man to Heaven, to be *thinking and deliberating* what to do, as long as he is unreſolved. And now I ſhall prove the Neceſſity of this.

II. Till you are Reſolved, you are not Converted, and that appeareth by theſe Evidences. 1. If you are not *firmly Reſolved*, it is certain that you do not *firmly believe*. For ſuch as your *Belief* is, ſuch will be the effects of it upon the *Will*. An unſound Opinionative belief, will produce but tottering, languiſhing purpoſes: but a firm belief will cauſe a firm Reſolution of the Will. And if your belief be unſound, you muſt confeſs you are unconverted.

2. Moreover, if you do not eſteem God above all Creatures, and Heaven above Earth, and Chriſt and Grace above ſinne, you are certainly unconverted. But if you have ſuch a true *eſtimation*, you will certainly have a firm Reſolution. For you will Reſolve for that which you highly eſteem.

3. If God have not your firm Reſolution, he hath not indeed your Heart and Will: For to give God your Hearts and Wills, is principally by firm Reſolving for him. And if God have not your Hearts, you are ſure unconverted.

4. Moreover, if you are not firmly Reſolved,

Resolved, your *Affections* will not be *sincere and stedfast*. For all the *Affections* are such as to their *sincerity*, as the *Will* is; which doth excite or command them. And nothing is more mutable then the *Affections* in *themselves* considered: They will be hot to day, and cold to morrow, if they be not rooted in the *firm Resolution* of the *Will*, which is the life of them.

5. Lastly, Without a *firm Resolution*, there can be no *faithfull obedience* and *execution*, of the Will of God. For if men be not *Resolved*, they will heavily go on, and lazilie proceed, and easily come off: For their hands go to work without their hearts. It is the greatest work in all the world, that God calls you to; and none but the *Resolved* are able to go through with it. Of which we shall give you a fuller account anon.

III. In the next place, let me intreat you, in the feare of God, to look after this great and Necessary part of your Conversion. There are many degrees of good motions in the mind; but all that falls short of Resolution is unsound.

Many are brought to Doubt whether all be well with them, and to have some fears thereupon, that yet will not be brought so far as to consider soberly of the matter, and deliberate what is best to be done, and to advise with their Ministers for the furthering of their Salvation. Many that are perswaded so far as to consider, and deliberate, and take advice, yet go no further then some cold wishes, or purposes, which are all overcome by the love of the world, and the power of their sinnes. Many that do proceed to some kind of Practice, do only take a taste, or an essay of Religion, to try how they can like it; and begin some kind of outward Reformation, without any firm Resolution to go through with it: Or if their purposes seem strong, it is but occasioned by something without, and not from a setled habit within. All these are short of a state of special Saving Grace, and must be numbred with the unconverted.

It is a common, and very dangerous mistake, that many are undone by, to think that every good Desire is a certain sign of Saving Grace. Whereas you may have more then *bare Desires*, even *purposes*,

poses, and promises, and some performances, and yet perish for want of Resolution, and Regeneration. Do you think that Judas himself had not some good Desires, that followed Christ so long, and preached the Gospel? Do you think that Herod had not some good Desires, that heard John gladly, and did many things accordingly? Agrippa had some good Desires, when he was almost perswaded to be a Christian. They that for a time believe have sure some good Desires, and more, Matth. 13. 20. And so had the young man, that went away sorrowfull from Christ, when he could not be his Disciple; unless he would part with all that he had, Luke 18. 23. Matth. 19. 22. And doubtless those had more then good Desires, that had known the way of Righteousness, and had escaped the pollutions of the world, through the knowledg of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, 2 Pet. 2. 20, 21. And so had those, Heb. 10. 26, 29. That had received the knowledg of the Truth, and were Sanctified by the blood of the Covenant. And those Heb. 6. 4, 5, 6. That were once inlightened, and tasted of the Heavenly gift, and were made partakers

of the Holy Ghost, and tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come. And sure *Ananias* and *Saphira* had more then some *good Desires*, when they *sold all, and brought half the price to the Apostles.*

Believe it Sirs, there are none of your Desires, or Endeavours, that will serve turn, to prove you in a state of Grace, unless they be accompanied with firm Resolution. Be it known to you that you are unconverted, if you are not *habitually Resolved.* And therefore I must here intreat you all, to put the question close to your hearts, Are you *Resolved, firmly Resolved*, to give up your selves and all to Christ, and to be wholly his, and follow his conduct? or are you not? The question is not, what good meanings, or wishes, or purposes, you may have, but whether you are *Resolved*, and *firmly Resolved*? Take heed Sirs, what you venture your Souls upon: God will not be dallied with, nor be deceived. He will have no *unresolved*, false-hearted servants.

Before I proceed to urge you further, I shall here tell you what *kind* of *Resolution* it must be, that will prove a man

converted: and then I shall give you such *Motives* as should perswade you to it.

It is not *all kind* of *Resolution* that will serve turn; but it is only that which hath these following properties, that will evidence a state of Grace.

1. As to the *Matter*, it must be the whole Essence of Christianity, that must be Resolved on. It must be no less then a closing with God as your chiefest happiness, to be Loved above all, and as your chiefest Lord to be obeyed before all: and a closing with Jesus Christ, as your only Saviour, your Teacher, and your Lord; to bring your hearts again to God, and reconcile you to him: and a closing with the Holy Ghost as your Sanctifier, to make you a holy people, and cleanse you from all your sinne of heart and life, and guide you by the Ministery, Word, and Ordinances, to Everlasting life. Thus must you Resolve to deliver up your selves to God the Father, Sonne, and Holy Ghost, to be made a peculiar people, zealous of good works. Should you be never so Resolute in some point of Religion, and as *Ananias* to give God Half, and to become half Religious, and half Holy, and half Heavenly,

this is but to be half Christians, and will not bring you half way to Heaven: It's entire Christianity that must be Resolved on.

2. You must also be *Resolved* for *present* obedience, and to turn without any more delay; and not only Resolve to turn to *morrow*, or sometime hereafter. No Resolution is sincere in this case, if it be but for the future: If you had rather stay but one day or hour longer in the state of sinne, and service of the flesh, you are no true Disciples of Christ, though you should be Resolved to turn to morrow.

3. And your Resolution must be *Absolute* and peremptory, not only *without* any secret *Reserves*, but *Positively* against any such Reserves. Here it is that *Hypocrites* commonly fall short: They see they must mend, and they are convinced that a holy life is necessary, and they Resolve hereupon to change their course, and turn religious: but either it is with this secret Reserve, *Provided alwaies that I look to my credit, or estate, or life, what ever I do, and provided that I go no further in Religion then will stand with these; provided that godlines*

lineſs be not my undoing in the world. Or elſe if he have not actually ſuch thoughts, he hath them alwaies virtually, and habitually: He is not Reſolved *againſt* ſuch Reſerves: He hath not conſidered that Chriſt will have no Diſciples that cannot and will not part with all; and that if he hope for Heaven, he muſt not look for a treaſure on earth, but only paſs through the world as a travailer, or labour in it as the harveſt of the Lord, in expectation of a Reward and Reſt hereafter; and ſo Reſolved to take Chriſt on theſe ſelf denying terms. But he that will be ſaved muſt be *thus* reſolved: Even to ſell *all*, to buy the unvaluable *pearl*, Matth. 13. 46. 47. To make ſure of Heaven, though he loſe all on Earth by it: to lay up his hopes in the life to come, and venture, and let go all rather then thoſe hopes: to take Chriſt abſolutely upon his own terms, for better and worſe, as being certain that there is no other way to life, and that there is no danger of loſing by him. The Hypocrite is like a man that when he delivereth up the poſſeſſion of his houſe, will make his bargain, that he will keep this room, or that room to himſelf, for his own

own use. Or like a servant that will not be hired but on Condition that his Master shall not set him to such or such work that he loves not: But Christ will have no such servants: You must deliver up all to him, or he will accept of none: You must give *him* leave to make his Conditions for you, and tell you on what terms you must serve him, and wholly referre the matter *to him*, even for life it self, and not offer to put Conditions upon him, and think to bring *him* to any terms of yours. It is not true Resolution unless it be Absolute, and unreserved, and against all reserves: Yea, and that also as to perseverance; that you Resolve to give up your selves *finally* as well as *totally*, not only without any Reserve of a Revocation, but against any such Revocation: It must not be a coming to Christ upon essay, or meer tryal, that if you do not like you may leave again: But you must make an unchangable everlasting Covenant: It must be part of your Covenant, that you will never revoke it.

4. Moreover, your Resolution must be *well grounded*: You must know what the *Essentials* are of that Religion which you

you Resolve on, and you must be moved to it by right and weighty Considerations; and go upon reasons that will hold up your Resolution. For should you Resolve on the most necessary work (as this is) upon mistakes, and wrong, or insufficient Reasons, as the will of man, the custom of the country, the reputation of Christianity, or only such like; there is no likelyhood that your Resolution should endure, and it is not sincere while it doth endure.

5. Your Resolution must be accompanied with a *sense of your own insufficiency*, to stand to it immutably, and execute it faithfully by your own strength; as knowing the corruption, and deceitfulness of our own heart: And it must be strengthned, and supported by a *confidence*, or *dependance* on the *sufficiency of Christ*. on whose Grace, and Spirit you must rely, both for the continuing, and the performing of your Resolutions; as knowing that without him you can do nothing, but that you can do all things (necessary) through Christ strengthning you.

6. Lastly, Your Resolution is not Savingly sincere, unless it be *habitually*. It

is

is a very hard queſtion, how far ſome moving exhortation, or the approach of death in ſicknes, may prevaile with the unſanctified for an *Actual* Reſolution: Undoubtedly very farre: But that's a mans mind and will which is *Habitually* his mind and will: When the very Inclination, and bent of your will is Right, then only is your heart right. A bowle may by a rub, or banck, be turned contrary to the byas: but when it is over the rub it will follow the byas againe in its ordinary courſe. The flame may be hindred from aſſending a little while, but when it is got over the ſtop, it will be mounting upward. A ſtone will move upwards againſt its Nature, while it is followed by the ſtrength of the hand that caſt it; but when the ſtrength is ſpent, it will quickly fall again. It is not an extraordinary act, that you can try your ſelves by, but ſuch a free courſe and tenor of your lives, as will prove that you have a *new Nature*, or a *heart Inclined and Habituated to God*. The main buſineſs therefore is to prove that you are *Habitualllly Reſolved*. Set all theſe together now, and you may ſee what Reſolution it is, that muſt prove you to be

Covnerted.

Converted. 1. It must be a Resolution for all the Essence of Christianity, and not only some part. 2. It must be a Resolution for *present* Obedience, and not only for some distant time to come: 3. It must be an *Absolute*, peremptory Resolution, without and against *Reserves* for the flesh: both *Total*, and final; without and against any Revocation. 4. It must be *soundly grounded*; and *moved* by *right Principles*: 5. It must be joyned with a *humble sence of your insufficiency*, and a dependance on Christ, for continuing, and performing it. And 6. It must be *Habitual*, and such as sets right the bent and drift of heart and life. All this is of Necessity.

Well Sirs; you see now what you *must* do: the next question then is, what you *will* do? A great many of motions God hath made to you, to let go your worldlinesse, and wickednesse, and become New Creatures, and live to God, and never could you be got to Resolve, and obey them. Many thoughts you have had of it, I suppose; and long you have been purposing that: Turn you would; but

but all have come to little or nothing, because you were never fully Resolved. I am once more sent to you on this message from God, to see whether yet you will Resolve: Whether after all you trifling delaies, and after all your wilfull sinning, and abuse of Gods Patience, against your own knowledg and Consciences, you will yet Resolve. What say you? Shall God be your Master indeed, and shall Christ be your Saviour & Lord? Shall Heaven be your happiness, and have your hearts indeed? Shall Holiness be your business indeed? and shall sinne be your hatred, and the flesh and the world be your enemies indeed, and used accordingly from this day forward, without any more ado? I beseech you Sirs Resolve, and fully Resolve.

And because I know if we prevaile not with you in this you are undone for ever, and therefore I am loath to let you go before we have brought you, if it may be, to Resolve: I will give you here some Considerations to turn the scales, and if you will but read them, and soberly consider of them, I shall have great hope to prevail with you, yet after all. One would think that the fifty Consider-

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rations under the last Direction might suffice: But lest all should be too little, I will add these following.

1. Consider I beseech you, *what leisure you have had to think of the matter.* You have lived many years in the world already; and you have had nothing to do in it, but to seek after true Happiness: Even your worldly labours ought to have been all but in order to this. And yet are you *unresolved?* Alas Sirs, have you lived some twenty some thirty years and more in the world, and yet are you not Resolved, what you came hither for, or what you have to do here? Is it twenty, or thirty, or fourty years, since you set out, and should by this time have been farre on your journey, and are you yet *unresolved whither* to go, or *which way* to go? As if you were newly entering the world, or as if you had never heard of your business. I think so many years are a faire time of Consideration, and it's time to be Resolved, if you will Resolve at all.

2. And I pray you consider, *what Helps you have had to have Resolved you before this.* If you did not *know* what you had to look after, and which way to take,

take, you ſhould have enquired: You had the Word of God to adviſe with; and you had your Teachers to adviſe with; and many experienced Chriſtians to adviſe with. You wanted not for the wiſeſt faithfuleſt Counſailers; if you had been but willing and diligent, certainly you might have been Reſolved long ago.

3 And conſider I beſeech you, what a caſe it is that you are unreſolved in: Is it ſo hard a queſtion that all this time, and all theſe helps cannot Reſolve you? What? whether God or the fleſh ſhould be firſt obeyed, and loved? Whether Heaven or Earth. Eternal Glory or the tranſitory pleaſures of ſinne ſhould be preferred? Whether you ſhould care and labour more to be ſaved from ſinne and Hell, or from poverty and worldly croſſes, and reproaches? Theſe, and ſuch like are the queſtions to be Reſolved: And are theſe ſo hard, that all your wit, and all the adviſe you can have from Scripture and Miniſters, would not ſerve turn to help you to a Reſolution, no not in twenty or thirty years time? O wonderful! that ever the Devil ſhould be able ſo to befool men! That Reaſonable Creatures

Creatures should be so phrenetick, that they cannot be resolved whether it be better be saved, or be damned? or whether sinne with Hell after it, be better than Holiness with Heaven after? The Lord have Mercy upon the poor distracted world, and bring some more of them to their wits! We have *Wise men*, if themselves may be judges; very wise in their own conceit, that know many great matters in the world, and yet do not practically know whether God or the Devil be the better master; whether sinne or Holiness be the better work; and whether Heaven or Hell be the better wages? If they say *They know* these things, judge by their lives whether they *know* them *Practically* or not? *Resolve* they will not for God, and Holiness, and Heaven, nor against the flesh, the world, and sinne; whatever they may be brought to confess to their self-condemnation. Is it not a pitifull case, that such points as these, should seem so hard to reasonable men, as to be so long in Resolving of them?

4. And I pray you Consider, *How horribly by this you disgrace your understandings.* You that cannot abide to be

derided as sots and fools in the world, do yet abuse your selves thus grosly, as if there were never greater sots scarce upon the Earth. We have proud men that are so high in their now eies, that they can hardly endure contempt from others, and love almost none that think but meanly or dishonourably of them; and yet what a horrible contempt and dishonour do they cast upon themselves? If one of these our wise neighbours, should study seaven years, to know whether the Sea be fire or water, whether a mountain be heavy? Whether the fire be hot or cold? and could not be Resolved after so many years Consideration; what would you think and say of these wise men? Why Sirs, it is far grosser folly, I tell you again, it is far grosser folly, to be unresolved whether you should be Holy or unholy? which is in plain English, whether it be better go to Heaven or to Hell? For Faith and Holiness is the way to Heaven; and an unholy life is the way to Hell: And if you will needs forsake the *way to* Heaven, you may hope to come thither as long as you will; but you may as well hope to touch the Moon with your finger, or to runne up and down

with

with a mountain on your backs. And if you will hold on in the *way* to Hell, that is, in an unsanctified state, you may say you hope for all that to escape Hell, even as wisely as to leap into the Sea, and say I hope to scape drowning, or to throw down your selves headlong from the top of the steeple, and say I hope to scape hurting me, as well as you. Sirs, I beseech you do not abuse God, and abuse Christ, and the Spirit, and Scripture, and withall abuse your immortal Souls, for I know not what; for a stinking sin; for a thing of nought: Your Souls are noble Creatures, and your understandings are noble faculties: Why will you expose them to be the scorn of Satan, and make them so base and sottish as you do? You can see the folly of a poor drunkard, that will make a beast of himself, and go reeling and talking nonsence about the street, for the boies to hoot at him, and make himself the laughing-stock of the town: And I pray you why do you not understand, that till you are Resolved for a Holy, Heavenly life, you are all drunk, while you think your selves to be sober? You are as miserable as the other, and more in this, that

yours is in your natures, and theirs is but an accident; yours is continued, and theirs (in that particular) but by fits. In the Name of God Sirs, bethink you, whether you can possibly more disgrace your wits, then to be unresolved of a case as plain as the high way, and which your Everlasting Salvation or damnation lieth on? If one of you could not in twenty years be Resolved; whether the the Sunne be light or dark, or whether the day or the night be fitter for rest; or whether it be better plow and sow, or let all alone, and hope God will give you a crop without labour; would you take this for a wise man? Again I tell you, your folly is more gross, that cannot all this while be Resolved, whether you should cast away your wilfull sinnes, and give up your selves to Christ, and a Holy life, to obtain the Glory, and scape the misery that is hard at hand. If you stood up to the neck in the water, or stood but in a storm of raine, you would not be so long in deliberating, whether it were better for you to stay there longer or come out. If your finger were but in the fire, you need not so long a deliberation, whether you

should

should take it out. Any yet these wise men, are under many thousand unpardoned sinnes, and under the curse of the Law of God, and within a step of everlasting fire, and have no way possible to escape, but by Conversion, Faith and Holiness; and this God hath told them, as plain as the tongue of man can speak, and yet they are *Considering* of it, whether it be best to come out of it; and *yet* they cannot be Resolved? Did I say They are *Consid ring?* Nay, the Lord be mercifull to them, they are so dead-hearted and besotted, that they do not so much as *ſeriouſly Conſider* of it: But even runne on without *Conſideration?* Ah poor wretches! They are ready to go to another world, and may look every day when the bell toles for them, and when death will bring them to their endless life, and yet they have not wit enough, to *Resolve* whether they should make ready: no nor wit enough in their most carless, worldly state, to know that they *are unready*. Death is coming, and Judgment is coming, and the burning Wrath of God is coming, and are even at the doore; and yet these wise men are unresolved of that only way that

is of absolute necessity to their safety; They must have more time yet to consider of the matter, whether it be best for them to turn or no? They stand at the very brink of Hell; and yet they must further consider of it, whether it be better to turn back or to go on: Nay they will go on without Consideration! And yet these men would take it haynously, if one should lay hands on them, and carry them to *Bedlam*; or but tell them of the hundreth part of the sottishness that they are guilty of.

5. And it is further considerable, that *these men that are all this while unresolved, about their Conversion and Sanctification, have wit enough to resolve of doubtfuller, and less necessary matters, without any such advising or delaies:* And they are men of ordinary parts and capacities, for the matters of this world. They can eat when they are hungry, and drink when they are thirsty, without a twelvemonths time to advise first on it: They can resolve to go to bed at night, and to rise in the morning, without a years or a daies deliberation. If they have any thing to buy or sell, they will not deliberate upon it till the market be past: If they

they have their land to plow, or their corn to sow, or reap, or mow, they will not take a twelve months time to pause upon it. They can quicky Resolve upon their every-daies business, their travails, their labours, and all their ordinary affaires. And yet these *same men* cannot Resolve in seaven years time, and seaven to that, whether Heaven or Earth should be more loved and laboured for? Or whether a corruptible flesh, a wicked fancie, a greedy throat, should be pleased before the God of Heaven, though the pleasing of it cost them the loss of their Salvation?

Why Sirs, a man that is well in his wits, would think that these matters should be more out of doubt then the former, and speedilier resolved on? One would think it should be an easier question, whether you should turn to God and a Holy life, for the saving of your immortal Souls? then whether you should eate, or drink, or sleep, for the preservation of your bodies? For I can in many cases bring some reason that should perswade you to forbeare eating, or drinking, or sleeping for a considerable time: but no man breathing can speak a word

of reason (except mens folly should be called *Reason*,) that should perswade you to forbear your Conversion for a minute. And if you mistake about these *bodily* matters, the loss may be repaired, at least in the world to come: but if you die before you are Resolved, and firmly Resolved, to give up your Soul and body to Christ, and live a Holy, Heavenly life, you are undone body and Soul for ever, and all the world can never save you.

Oh what a strange and horrible thing is it, that a man that hath the wit to manage his affaires as plausibly as any of his neighbours, that can overwit others in the matters of the world; that can govern Towns and Countries; that is learned in his Profession, in Law, in Physick, in Merchandize, in Navigation, or any the like; I say, that a man of so deep a reach, so plodding and active a wit as this, should yet be unresolved, yea at 30 or 40 years old be unresolved, whether to be Sanctified or unsanctified; whether to be Holy and be Saved, or to be unholy, though God hath professed expressly that such shall not see the face of God, *Heb.* 12. 14. These are our wise

wiſe men, theſe are too many (beſides the ignorant country men) of our Gentlemen, our Worſhipfull, and Honourable men, our great Schollars, and men of noble or reverend eſteem; that yet are unreſolved, whether to be ſaved or to be damned. Though God hath written a Bible to Reſolve them, and a thouſand books are written to Reſolve them; and Preachers are ſtudying, and preaching to Reſolve them; and a thouſand mercies are caſt into the ſcales, that one would think ſhould help to turn them; and ſome ſharp afflictions are helping to Reſolve them; and twenty, or fourty years certain experience, of the vanity of this world, the deceitfullneſs of riches, and honour, and pleaſure, and the unprofitableneſs of ſinne, one would think ſhould Reſolve them; yet after all this they are *unreſolved*, whether they ſhould preſently let go their ſinne, and whether God, or the fleſh ſhould be pleaſed or diſpleaſed? If this be the wiſdom of theſe men, the Lord bleſs me, and all his choſen, from ſuch wiſdom!

6. Nay conſider further of *your unreaſonable wickedneſs: Are not many of your Judgments*

Judgments Reſolved, when yet your hearts and wils are unreſolved. I am confident, nay I am certain it is ſo. You are at once both *Reſolved and unreſolved.* What a confuſion and warre do you thus make in your own Souls? The Judgment is for one thing, and the Will and Affections are for another thing. What? are you not led by Reaſon? Will you let out your Affections, and lead your lives, quite contrary to your knowledg. Would not moſt of you give it me as your Judgments under your hands, that it's a thouſand times better to caſt away your drunkenneſs, your filthineſs, your worldlineſs, and other known ſinnes, then to keep them any longer? What ſay you? are you not Convinced that it were your wiſeſt courſe to part with them this very day and hour? Undoubtedly many of you are. And yet for all this will you not Reſolve to do it? Are you not perſwaded in your Conſciences, that it's better to dye in a Holy and Heavenly ſtate, then in a looſe and careles worldly ſtate? And that it were your ſafeſt, and wiſeſt courſe to become New men, and lead a Holy Heavenly life without delay. Dare you deny this? Is it not your

your Judgment? And yet will you not do it? Are you Resolved that it *should* be done, and *must* be done, and yet will you not Resolve to *do* it? Why what is this but to be condemners of your selves? to carry a Judge about with you in your own brests, that is still passing sentence against you? *Happy is he* (saith the Spirit of God, *Rom.* 14. 22.) *that condemneth not himself in that which he alloweth.* If your Judgments be Resolved, let your Wills Resolve, or else you are wilfull aderfaries of the light, and fight against Reason, and unman your selves, and sinning wilfully against your Knowledg, shall be beaten with many stripes.

7. Me thinks also it should somewhat quicken you to *Resolve*, when you consider *what a case you had now been in, if death had found you unresolved.* For if you are *unresolved*, you are *unsanctified*; and if not Sanctified, you are not pardoned, or justified, and therefore undoubtedly you had been past all help, in endless misery, if you had died all this while, before you were firmly Resolved for God. O what a dangerous ticklish condition have you stood in all this while? What

What wise man would live an hour in such a case for all the world? For feare left that hour should be his last. And yet would you stay longer in it? and still are you unresolved?

8. Believe it, *Christ will not own you as his servants, nor trust you what ever promises you may make him, as long as you are unresolved.* Who will take a servant that is not resolved to do any service? Who will take an unresolved person if he knows it, as a wife, or friend into his intimate love? And indeed you are not truly Christians till you are Resolved to take Christ for better and worse. What ever state is short of this, is also short of true Sanctification, and will fall short of Heaven. Christ is Resolved to stick to his servants, and he will have no servants, that be not resolved to stick to him.

9. And indeed if *you be unresolved; as you are falsheartedat the first setting out, so it is certain that you will never go well on, nor endure to the end in case of tryall, nor can you do the business of a Christian life, without Resolution.* If you will be Christ's Disciples, you must reckon upon persecutions: *You must take up your Cross*

and

and follow him: You must be hated of all men for his sake and the Gospels; and you must prepare for prison, and fire, and sword. There's no hope of being saved, while you purpose to save your pleasures, riches, liberties, or lives, Matth. 16. 25. Marke 8. 35. Luke 9. 24. And will a man that is unresolved forsake his friends, estate, and life, for the sake of Christ, and the hopes of Glory? He cannot do it. I know that a carnal ungrounded Resolution, may decive a man in the day of tryal; when the self-suspecting, fearfull Christian may hold out: But yet without a humble self-denying Resolution, joyned with an adherence to Christ for strength, there's no man will hold out. *If thou be a wavering minded man, thou wilt be unstedfast in all thy waies*, Jam. 1. 8. If thou be not Resolved, the words of a mans mouth will turn thee out of the way; the very mocks and scorns of a drunkard, or a fool that hath no understanding in the matters of Salvation, will make thee shrink, and hide thy profession, and be ashamed of Christ, in whom alone thou hast cause to Glory. If thou be not a Resolved man, what better can be expected, but

that

that thou turn as the weather-cock with every wind, and fit thy Religion to thy worldly ends, and as another *Judas* sell thy Lord for a little money. If thou fall not away, it will be but for want of a tryal to procure it; and therefore in Gods account thou art gone already; becauſe thy Reſolution was never with him.

When you turn to God, there will remain within you the remnants of your corruption, a body of death, a rebelling fleſh: and this will be ſtill tempting you, and drawing you from God: And O how ſtrong do theſe temptations ſeem to the Soul that is unreſolved? Yea without a firm habituate Reſolution, it is impoſſible to overcome them. Your whole way to Heaven is a continual warfare: You have enemies that will diſpute every foot of the way with you. There's no going a ſtep forward, but as the ſhip doth in the Sea, by cutting its way through the waves, and billows; and as the plow doth in the earth, by cutting through the reſiſting ſoil: There is *ſelf* which is your principal enemy, and there is Satan, and the world, and almoſt all that you meet with in it, will prove your hinderers:

hinderers: And you must make your way by valour, and Holy Violence through all: And will an *unresolved* man do this? You will scarce ever bow your knee to God in secret prayer, nor set your selves upon serious Meditations, but the flesh and the Devil will be drawing you off; You will never attempt, a faithfull reproof, a liberal work of Charity, a hazardous confession of Christ, or any dangerous or costly duty, but the flesh and the Devil will plead against it, and put you to it: And in these and many such cases of your lives, you will never break through, nor do any good on it, without Resolution. Do I need to tell you how hard the way of Salvation is, that fly from it on mistake, because you think it harder then it is? Do I need to tell you how false you will prove to Christ, if you have not Resolution, that know it by your ordinary, miserable experience, that a poor temptation will make you sinne against your knowledg? How many good wishes and purposes have you had already, in sickness or at a lively Sermon, that are all come to nothing, for want of a firm Habituate Resolution? What abundance of time-servers,

ſervers, and of chaffie profeſſours are lately fallen off, to the way of riſing and riches in the world, or to the pride, and giddy levity of dividers, that oppoſe the Truth of God, and their Teachers, and trouble the Church, and all becauſe they were never well rooted by a ſound Reſolution. They that take Chriſt but upon liking, do uſually miſlike him, when he calls them to ſelf-denial. For they had never that connatural principle that ſhould effectually diſpoſe their Souls to like him; nor had they ever the inward experiences of power and ſweetneſs, which are proper to the ſincere, and ſhould increaſe their liking of him. Either *Reſolve* therefore, or ſtand by and periſh.

10. I beſeech you conſider alſo, *What abundance of clear undeniable Reaſons, doth God give in to thee, to turn the Scales, and cauſe thee to Reſolve.* He fetcheth Reaſons from his own Dominion, and Soveraignty? Should not a creature obey the Lord that made him? He reaſoneth with you from his daily preſervations. Do you live upon him, and ſhould you not obey him? He reaſoneth with you from his Almightineſs:

You

You are all at his Mercy, and wholly in his hands; and yet dare you disobey him? He reasoneth with you from his Love and Goodness: Never did evil come from him; nor did he ever do any wrong: Never was there man or Angel that was a loser by him; it is not possible to have so good a master, and yet will you not obey him? He setcheth reasons from all his Mercies: Every bit of bread is from him, and should be an Argument with thee to obey him: Every daies health, and strength, and comforts; and every nights rest and ease, thy Mercies at home, and thy Mercies abroad; in private and in publike; all should be so many Arguments with thee to Resolve. You cannot look upon a plant, or a flower under your feet, upon the Sun, or a Starre that's over your heads; or upon any creature, but you may see so many Reasons that should move you to Resolve. If all these will not serve, he setcheth yet stronger Reasons from the Incarnation, example, and blood of the Sonne of God: Canst thou look on God incarnate for sinne, combating with Satan, and conquering for thee, and dying, and bleeding, and buried for thy sinne; and

yet be unresolved to leave that sinne, and turn to him that hath bought thee by his blood? If all this will not serve, he Reasoneth with thee from thy own benefit. If thou care not for God, dost thou care for thy self? Dost thou regard thy own Soul? If thou do, it's high time to Resolve. He reasoneth with thee from Everlasting Glory. Is a certain Kingdom, an Everlasting, glorious Kingdom, nothing to thee? Art thou content to be thrust out of that Eternal Inheritance? Is the filthy pleasure of the flesh for a few hours, better then the endless joys of the Saints? He pleads also with thee from the danger that thou art near. Poor Soul, thou little seest what others see, that are dead before thee. Thou little knowest what they feel that died before they were Resolv'd for God. He fetcheth his Reasons from the certaine, everlasting flames of Hell: and is there not force enough in these for to Resolve thee? Good Lord, what a thing is a senselesse sinner? Dost thou believe Heaven and Hell as thou takest on thee to do? If thou do believe them, is it possible for thee believingly to think of Heaven, and its Eternal Glory, and yet

to be unresolved whether to turn or not? Or canst thou think of the endless miseries of the damned, and yet be unresolved whether to turn or not? Can any heart be so senseless, or deluded?

Moreover he pleadeth with thee from the equity and sweetness of his Service. It is but to Love him, and to seek his Kingdom, and forbear those things that hurt thy Soul. His Commands are not unreasonable nor grievous. Darest thou speak out and say that sinne is better; and that Satan hath provided thee a better work then God hath done? He reasoneth with thee also from his Wisdom and his Justice. He tels thee that as Satan hath nothing to do with thee, and as he is none of thy friends, and meaneth thee not so well as God doth; so he is not able to prescribe thee a more just and perfect law then God hath done. Follow God and thou art sure thou shalt never be deceived or misled. For he wanteth not Wisdom, or Power, or Goodness to be a meet Law-giver and Guide: But if thou follow the Devil, the world, or the flesh, thou followest a blind and a deceitfull guide. And yet after all these Reasons art thou not Resolved?

He Reasoneth with thee also from thy own experience: What good hath sinne done thee? And what hurt would Holiness do thee? Yea he reasons with thee from the experience of all the world: *Who was ever the better for sinning? And who was ever the worse for Holiness? How long will thy fleshly delights endure? What will this do for thee in the extremity? Was ever man made Happy by it? Thou knowest well enough thou must shortly leave it; and that it will forsake thee in thy greatest need: But so would not God, if thou hadst Resolvedly given up thy self to him. All men that refuse a Heavenly life, do sooner or later wish that they had chosen it.*

Abundance of such Reasonings God useth with thee in his Word, and by his Ministers; and dost thou think indeed that there is not weight enough in these to give thee cause immediately to Resolve? How little or nothing canst thou say against them? Canst thou bring any Reason, that is Reason indeed, against these or any of these Reasons of the Lord? Dareſt thou say that ever a one of them is false, or insufficient? And what are the Reasons which you have on the contrary to hinder you from Resolving?

For-

Forsooth, because your sinnes are sweet, you would fain have the pleasure of them a little longer yet: O wretched Souls! that find more pleasure in the abusing of your Maker and Redeemer, then in loving, honoring, and pleasing him: That delight more in serving the flesh, and the Devil, then in serving God and seeking after his Favour and your own Salvation. You are a hundred times madder then a man that lieth tumbling himself in his dung, and will not rise out of it to receive a Kingdom, because it is so soft and so sweet that he is loth yet to leave it: You are foolisher then *Nebuchadnezzar* had been, if he had been loath to return again to his Kingdom, because he would fain stay longer among the beasts of the fields; among whom in his distraction he had betaken himself, *Dan.* 4. 31, 32, 33. And what other Reasons have you against Resolving? forsooth you shall be mockt or jested at by others: By whom I pray you? Not a man but a miserable fool will do it: Yea but you are told you must forsake all, and be ready to die for Christ, if he call you to it. Very true! and can you keep that which he calleth you to forsake?

sake? How long will you keep it? Silly Souls! do you not know that you forsake it by not forsaking it, and lose all, by saving any thing? and that you have no way to save it but by losing and forsaking it. Suppose you were by enemies banished out of *England*, and upon pain of death you must be gone within a twelvemonth: And a King that loveth you inviteth you to his Country, and tells you for the poor livings that you have lost, he will make you Lords and Princes, so you will bring with you the little goods you have, and leave nothing behind you. Hereupon one man takes the next wind, and ships over all his riches, that he may have it when he comes there: Another saith, I am loath to leave my goods; I have a while longer to stay here, and what shall I do without them? I am loath to see the habitation of my Ancestours impoverished: And so when his time is expired, he is fain to leave them all behind him, and hath none that will receive him in the Country where he must abide. Which of these think you is the wiser man? Which of them was it that lost his goods, and which did save them? I speak to you but such another parable

as Christ used to you himself, *Luke* 16. 2, 3, 4, 9. Where you are advised to send your riches before you; and to make you friends of the *mammon* of unrighteousness, that when you *dye* you may be received into the everlasting habitations.

I know there are other vain delusions that hinder you from Resolving: I will not call them Reasons; for they are unreasonable. I shall only say this to you, that if there be ever a man of you that heareth his words, that dare be such a Blasphemer, as to reproach the Laws and Image of his maker, and say that he hath made you too strict a Law, and laid too heavy a task upon you, and a Heavenly life is troublesome and unnecessary: If there be a man of you, that is so devilish, as that you dare plead the Devils cause, and justifie his work before the Lord's, and say that it is better to please the flesh; let that man prepare himself to make good these words before the Lord, and his Holy Angels; and be sure that he shall be there put to it in another manner then he is here by me: And if you have such Reasons as you will stand to before the Barre of God, to prove the Devil the better Master, and an unholy

life to be better then a Heavenly; see then that you look them up, and there make your best of them; and expect to live with the Master that you served; and to reape as you sowed, and eate the fruit of your fleshly waies, which you took to be the best. But if you have no such Reasons, but your Consciences are convinced that God should be served, and sinne should be speedily forsaken, and Heaven should be provided for above all; *Resolve* then to do it before you stirre? Or else say plainly, *I have no Reason to be wicked, but because I will be wicked: I will forsake God, and damn my own Soul without any Reason because I will do it.* And if you are at this pass, you may take your course.

11. Another thing that I would intreat you to consider of is this: *It is a most base and treacherous abuse of God, to make any question of this which you are so long unresolved of.* I confess when a blind mind hath raised such a question, it is lawfull for a reasonable man to answer it. But in him that makes a doubt of such a thing, as its a shame to himself, so it is a hainous indignity to God. If you had a chast and modest woman to your wife, I

think

think shee would take it for an injury, if you should but make a question of it, whether shee or a common whore be the honester woman? If your wife or children should bring before you a Hobby-horse or an Ass, and make a great question of it, whether you or the Ass be the comlier, or the wiser; How would you take this of them? If you should bring an ideot or a mad man before your Prince, and make a question whether he or they be the wiser man: or if you set a Rebel before him, and make a question which of them hath the better title to the Crown; what entertainment might you expect? I tell you it is ten thousand thousand times a baser affront and wrong to God, to set the pleasure of sinne before him, and make a question which of them is the better; and to set your riches, and your sports, and your drunkennes and gluttonny, and your whoredom, and your revenge, in competition with your Redeemer, and Everlasting Glory, and to make a question which of them is to be preferred. To make once a question wheher God or flesh should be pleased; whether Christ or the world should be loved, and followed? Whether

ther the Holy Ghoſt or the Devil ſhould dwell in us, and guide us? Whether the Saints of God, or the ſervants of the Devil ſhould be our choſen company? Whether the Word and Miniſters of Chriſt, or the examples and words of wicked men, ſhould more prevail with us? Whether Heaven or Earth ſhould be more carefully ſought after? Whether a Holy, or a careleſs, wicked life be more to be deſired? Or whether it be better to turn to God, or not? I ſay, to make ſuch a queſtion as this, or one of theſe, is little better then to put a ſcorn upon the God of Heaven? and favoureth of ſuch malice as is more like a Devil then a reaſonable man; or elſe of ſuch folly, as is below the Devil, and as none of you would be guilty of, in the matters of this world; If one ſhould but make a compariſon between you and ſome deformed monſter, or between your houſe and a ſwine-ſtie, though he gave you the better, I think you would take it as a ſcorn, that he ſhould make ſuch a compariſon, or queſtion? Much more may God ſo take it, when you make a queſtion betwixt ſinne and him. There is *but one* Infinite, unconceivable, perfect

perfect Good; and ſhall he be abaſed by ſuch a queſtion? There is *but one* thing that is contrary to God in all the world, that is worſe then the Devil himſelf, and that is ſinne; and ſhall this be put in queſtion or compariſon with God? There is but *One* that hath Loved us to the death, with a matchleſs, unconceivable, ſaving Love, and that is Jeſus Chriſt: And there is but one thing that is a deadly enemy to us and him, and that would damn us, when he is endeavouring to ſave us; and that is ſinne: And muſt there be a queſtion or compariſon between theſe? There is *One* Sanctifying Spirit, that would cleanſe, and heal, and ſave us; and there is a malicious ſpirit that would deceive us, defile us, and deſtroy us: And muſt there be any queſtion or compariſon made between theſe? There is *but one* Eternal Happineſs, and *One* Holy way to it: and there is but *One* everlaſting miſery, and a fleſhly, filthy, ſinfull way to it: And muſt there be made any queſtion which of theſe ſhould be preferred? Conſider I beſeech you what you do; And if it be ſo vile a thing to make any queſtion of it, what is it then to be ſtill unreſolved? Yea and to chooſe the worſer

worser part, and ſtick to it in your heart and life?

12. Conſider alſo that *Preſent Reſolution would put an end to a great many fruitleſs, troubleſome deliberations, and delaies.* If a man had but a weighty buſineſs of the world upon his hand, that his eſtate or life lieth on, it is a perplexity to him as long as he is unreſolved, what courſe he ſhould take: It will be troubling him when he ſhould reſt, and break his ſleep; it will fill him with muſings, and diſturb and diſtract his mind, and even make him Melancholy. And how can it chooſe but be a troubleſome diſtracting thing to your mind, to be unreſolved what courſe to take for your Everlaſting ſtate? I know ſome hearts are ſo deſperately hardened, and paſt feeling, (*Epeſ.* 4. 19.) and ſome mens Conſciences ſo ſeared as with an hot iron, (1 *Tim.* 4. 2.) that they can throw away all thoughts of Reſolution, and never be much troubled: But I hope that many are *not ſo* deſperate: It is not thus with all that are unconverted. How long have ſome of your minds been troubled whether to turn or not? *Reſolve* man, if thou love thy Soul, and put an end to ſuch troubles.

13. Con-

13. Consider also, that *Resolving will put an end to a great many of troublesome Temptations, that do assault you, and will break the heart of Satans hopes.* As long as you are unresolved, he hath still possession of you, and is still in hopes to keep possession. And as long as he hath any hope he will never give over, but will be repairing his Garrison, and making up all the breaches that the Ordinances of God had made. When one temptation takes not, he will be offering you another; and will be following and disquieting you day and night: But if once he see you firmly *Resolved*, his hopes will faile him, and you may be much freer from his temptations then you were before. I do not say he will give over: For even when you are broken away from him, he will make after you again. But it is a greater advantage to you to fight against him in the open field, under such a Captaine as Jesus Christ, that will assure you of the victory, then to be in his own prison with his fetters on your heels. You know the way to be troubled with an unwelcome suiter, is to delay your answer, and take time to consider of it: and the way to be eased of him, is to give

him

him a peremptory Resolute answer. And when he seeth you Resolved, he will cease.

14. Moreover, till *you are Resolved of your Conversion, you cannot Rationally Resolve of any one word or action of your lives:* Nay till they are all misemployed to your hurt. For no man can Resolve of the *Means* till he is Resolved of the *End*. You must Resolve *whither* to go, before you can Resolve *which way* to go. Before Conversion mens End is wrong; Their Intention and business is to please the flesh: And all their thoughts, and words, and actions, that have such an End, are wicked and pernicious. Till you are Resolved by Conversion to be for God, you have never a right End (in a prevailing sence;) and therefore you cannot order one thought, nor word, nor deed aright. I tell you, every thought you think, and every word you speak, and every deed you do while you are unconverted, are so many steps towards Hell, except only those that tend towards Conversion, and some way further it. Resolve therefore of this, or you can Resolve of nothing.

15. Moreover, if *you would presently and*

and firmly Resolve, you would ease your friends and the Ministers of Christ of much of their sorrows, and fears, and cares for you; and of much of the most troublesome part of their work. As long as you are unconverted, they can look on you but as the heirs of Hell, that will be quickly in those torments, if conversion prevent it not: and therefore their hearts are full of sorrow for you, when you sorrow not for your selves; and their care is how they might prevent your damnation, which they know without Conversion can never be done. Many a groan doth your Misery cost them! and many a thought have they of your danger, which you are not aware of. O what a grief is it to believing Ministers, to see so many of their people in the power of Satan, and the high-way to Hell, after all their care and labour for their recovery? We cannot *say* that the unconverted *shall* certainly perish, because we have yet hopes that they may be Converted, though they be not: But we know that if they *die* in the case that they are in, there is no hope of them at all; and we know they are uncertin to live an hour: And therefore as long as they are in this Condition,

dition, how can we chuſe but be filled with fear, and grief, and care for them? All the troubles that befall a faithfull Miniſter, in his worldly affaires, by croſſes and perſecutions, are nothing to the trouble that your ſinne and miſery bringeth to their minds. O what a comfortable life were it for a Miniſter to live with bread and water among a people that would obey the Goſpel; and give us hopes that we ſhould live with them in Heaven? O how cheerfully may we ſtudy for them, and preach to them, when we ſee that it is not loſt upon them! How willingly ſhould we prepare them the bread of life, when we ſee they feed and live upon it? How joyfully may we pray and praiſe God with them, when we think how they muſt joyn with us in the Celeſtial Praiſes? O Sirs, I beſeech you grudg not your Miniſters this comfort: Do not deſtroy your ſelves to grieve and trouble them. O put them once out of their fears and grief for you, by your *Reſolving, and ſpeedy return to God*: That they that have many a time thought in their hearts, *I am afraid this poor ſinner will never be recovered; I am afraid he will be a firebrand in Hell*, may now rejoice

rejoice with you when they see you coming home, and may meet you as the Father himself doth meet his prodigal children, and weep over you for joy, as they were wont to do in sorrow. You would ease our hearts of abundance of sad thoughts, if we could but perceive you once *Resolved*, and see you come home. Now you think our preaching harsh to you, because we tell you so much of sinne and of damnation: and you think our discipline more harsh, when we refuse to have communion with you. But if you would once Resolve and Turn, how gladly should we open our doores and our hearts to you: and how gladly should we turn the stream of our preaching, and tell you of nothing but Christ, and Heaven, and peace, and comfort, further then your own necessities should require it. What say you Sirs to this reasonable request? Will you Resolve without any more ado, and ease us of our grief and fears, and give us *but leave* to preach more comfortable Doctrine to you?

16. Moreover consider, that *you have much work to do when you are Resolved and Converted; and a great way to go when you*

have begun your journey towards Heaven: and till you are Resolved, none of this can be done. You can go no further, till Conversion have set you in the right way. Till then, the further you go, the further you are out of the way. Will you be unresolved till the night come on? Shall all the rest of your work be undone? Will you begin your race when you should be at the end. Alas you should be able to say as *Paul*, 2 Tim. 4. 8. *I have fought a good fight: I have finished my course: henceforth is laid up for me a crown of righteousness:* when as you cannot yet say, *I have begun my course; I am set in the right way.*

17. Consider also that *Resolution maketh Works easie and successfull.* The *resolute* Army is seldom conquered.. A *resolute* travailer will go through with his journy; and it is easier to himself: His spirits are excited; and doing it with vivacity, he findeth less trouble in it. A slow and lazy pase doth sometime sooneſt weary us. A slow motion is most easily stopt, when a swift one bears down that which would resist it. A man that Resolvedly sets himself to the Work of God, and is past any further deliberating of the matter,

matter, and is at a point with all the world, will make a pleasure of that which will stop and stall an unresolved professour. Resolve therefore for your own success and ease.

I tell you, by *Resolving* it is that you must conquer, and by *conquering*, you must obtain the Crown. The unresolved are wavering at every assault, like cowardly soldiers, even ready to runne before they fight. They will not bear the cost or labour: they are soon aweary: They cannot say *Nay* to an old Companion, or a tempting bait. But the Resolved breaks through all, and treads that under his feet as dirt, which another sells his Soul for. If he meet with reproaches and scornes from men, he remembreth that Christ foretold him this, and suffered much more of the like before him. If his friends turn enemies for the Gospel sake, he saith, *I was told of this before, even that I must be hated of all men for Christ.* If he be tied by lewd and wanton company, he saith as *David*, Psal. 119. 115. *Depart from me ye evill doers, for I will keep the Commandements of my God.* If he be tempted with rewards and honours in the world, he will not stand

wavering and longing after it, as *Balaam*; but he will say as the same *Balaam* was *forced* to do: *If you will give me a handfull of Gold and Silver, I cannot go beyond the Word of the Lord.* And *let their money perish with them, that think all the Gold in the World, worth the peace of a good Conscience and the favour of God.* If he be threathened by men, to move him to forsake his duty, he saith, *Whether it be better to obey God or man, judge ye?* If he heare seducers, he is rooted in the Spirit, and the infallible Word, and is not *shaken by every wind.* If he see never so many fall off by backsliding; he saith; *It was not only for their company that I chose the holy Way; God is still the same; and Heaven is the same; and Scripture is the same; and therefore I am Resolved to be the same.* If God afflict him by poverty, sickness, or other tryals, he saith; *I did not become a Christian to scape affliction, but to scape damnation! If he kill me yet will I trust in him: Shall I receive good at the hands of God, and not evill: Naked came I out of my mothers Wombe, and naked must I return to dust: the Lord giveth, the Lord taketh away: blessed be his name.* If oppressing enemies insult over him, he can

say

say as *Mic.* 7. 8, 9. *Rejoice not against me O mine enemy: when I fall I shall arise: when I sit in darkness the Lord shall be a light to me: I will bear the Indignation of the Lord, because I have sinned against him, until he plead my cause, and execute Judgment for me: He will bring me forth to the light, and I shall behold his Righteousness.* If the wicked cast in his teeth his profession, and the name of his God, he *rejoiceth that he is counted worthy to suffer for that Name*, and yet he *will hope to see the goodness of the Lord in the Land of the living.* And if he must go to Heaven through poverty, and a mean estate, he hath *learned to want, as well as to abound; and in what estate soever he be, therewith to be contented.* And so in the work of Conversion it self, for want of Resolution, many stick long in the birth, and they are hanging so long between Heaven and Hell, that it's a wonder of Mercy that God doth not cut them off and let them perish. But the well-Resolved Soul doth deal more faithfully with the light that is revealed to him; and doth not stand strugling so long against it, nor hold Christ and his Spirit so long in hand; but is glad to make sure work in

so great a business, and take so good a match while it is offered: And being engaged once, he *is firm as Mount Zion, that cannot be moved. Resolve* therefore that your work may be the more easy, and successfull; and conquer by Resolving.

18. *I suppose you dare not Resolve against Conversion, and a Heavenly life! And why then will you not Resolve for it?* What purpose you to do for the time to come? Is it your Resolution to live and die as you are? Have you not purposes in your mind to Repent hereafter? Dare you say, I am Resolved never to be Converted? Some may be so desperate; but I think it is but few even of the ungodly. Why this shews that there is a secret conviction in your consciences; O do not stifle it: Neutrality never saved Soul. Seing you dare not Resolve *against it*; Resolve *for it*.

19. Consider I beseech you, *how much it doth concern your selves, to have this question well and speedily Resolved.* God asketh you, whether you will be Converted and Sanctified or not? Resolve this question, and you Resolve your selves of a great many more that depend upon it.

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The answer to this, must be the answer to the rest. If the question were, *whether you will be pardoned or no? Whether you will live in Heaven or Hell for ever?* Whether you will dwell with God and Angels, or with Devils? You would not be long in answering this. You would Resolve without an hours delay. Why? *this is the question* Sirs: but the answer to it, must be the answer to the first question: For without Sanctification, there is no Salvation: If you *will* not be Converted, you *shall* be condemned whether you will or no: For God hath Resolved of this already, and there is no resisting the Resolution of God. The true state of the question is, *Whether you will Turn, or burn:* choose you whether; for it must be one. O therefore if you will but Resolve Christ and us this one question, that you will be Converted, Christ will Resolve you the principal questions, that concern you in the world, even whether you shall be pardoned or saved, and where, and with whom, you must live for ever.

20. Lastly consider, that if *you stay till you receive the sentence of death, it's two to one but that will force you to Resolve:*

But a forced Resolution will not serve turn: and then it will be very hard for you to discern whether it be any better then meerly from your fears. You put off all till sickness come, and you see once that you must die; there's no Remedy; and then you will cry, *O if the Lord would but recover me, and try me once againe with life, I would delay no longer, but I would become a new man, and live a Holy, and Heavenly life; I am resolved of it by the Grace of God.* Yea; but who knows whether these last Resolutions be sincere? We heare abundance speak this in their sickness, that never turn when they come to health, but forget all, and live in a manner as they did before. Is it not most likely to be only the fear of death that makes you take up these Resolutions? If it be so, they will never save you if you die, nor hold you to your promises if you live: For it is not bare Fear that is true Conversion; but it's a changed heart, that is fallen in Love with God and Holiness, and into a setled hatred of former sins. No late Repentance and Resolutions but these, will be any thing worth as to the saving of your Souls: And therefore if you should have true Resolutions

lutions at the last (which is too rare) you cannot choose but be much in doubt of them, when you find so much of fear upon your spirit, and consider that you never would Resolve till then. And therefore if you would have a Comfortable change, Resolve now in your prosperity, before the face of death affright you to it, and those feares and the lateness do make you question the truth, and soundness of it, and so deprive you of the comfort, which you have so much need of at a dying hour.

And thus I have given you twenty Considerations to perswade you, if it may be, presently to *Resolve*. I am sure there is truth, and reason, and weight in them; but what good they will do you I am not sure, because I know not how you will receive them.

IV. And now I come to the last part of my task; which is to *Direct* you how to perform the work that I have perswaded you to. But because it is meerly the *Determination of the Will*, it is *perswasion* that must do more to the work then *Direction*. And therefore I shall only desire

ſire you to look back upon the qualifications of ſound Reſolution, which I before laid down to you, and then take heed of the hinderances in your way, and ſo ſet your ſelves to do your duty.

Remember that I before told you, that it it is not a holy, ſaving Reſolution, unleſs it be 1. *Entire*, for the matter of it, comprehending all that is Eſſential to Chriſtianity: 2. And unleſs you Reſolve upon *preſent* obedience without delay: 3. And alſo unleſs it be *Abſolute* and peremptory, taking Chriſt for better and worſe, without any reſerve: 4. And unleſs it be *well grounded*: 5. And unleſs it be *built on the ſtrength of Chriſt*, and not only a carnal confidence of your own: 6. And unleſs it be *habitual and firm*, and become your ordinary frame and byas, and as it were the new Nature, and inclination of your Souls. By this much you ſee already what manner of Reſolution it is that you muſt have.

The next thing is, to adviſe you of the hinderances that you may avoid them. 1. The principal hinderance of Reſolution is *Secret Unbelief*; when Everlaſting life is taken but as an uncertainty, or men have no more but a ſlight Opinion of

of it. The Cure of this disease, I have often, and a little before delivered you.

2. Another thing that hindereth Resolution is *Inconsiderateness*, of which also I have spoken purposely before.

3. Another hinderance is a *sleepy Insensibility*; when the heart is hardened, and men are past feeling. We cannot tell how to awaken these men to be sensible of the things that should move them to Resolve. Of this also I have spoken by it self.

4. Another great hinderance is the *naturall stringness and averseness* of the mind of corrupted man, to these high and Spiritual things. So that we drive men by all our Arguments against the byas of their sinfull habits. And those habits plead against us more forcibly without a word of reason, then all the reason in the world could do. See therefore that you keep under changing means till your hearts be changed; And the perusing of such weighty Arguments as we offer you, may be of use to the changing of your hearts: For God useth to work on the Will, by the Understanding: And therefore Light hath an aptitude to change the Will it self.

5. More-

5. Moreover, *the rooted Interest of this world*, doth much hinder men from Resolving to turn: It's alwaies drawing them another way, or putting objections and cavils into their minds; and if they will needs Resolve, it is this that secretly enticeth them to reserves, and to resign themselves to God but with conditions and exceptions; and so makes them Hypocrites when they think themselves Converts; and cheats them with a halfe deceitfull Resolution, instead of one that is absolute and firm. Against this impediment also I have spoken before.

6. Another hinderance is, *The neerness of fleshly enticing objects*. When the Covetous man *seeth* his houses and lands, his goods and money, the very sight of them breaks the heart of all his better Resolutions. The drunkard seems to be Resolved till he *sees* the cup, and then his Resolution is broken. The Whoremonger seemeth to be Resolved, till the bait is brought *neer* him, and then he goes as an Oxe to the slaughter, and as a fool to the correction of the stocks. Certainly if these Resolutions were sound, they would either cause men to fly from the bait, and not come neere it, or else to refuse

refuse it when it is presented them: In the course of their lives their Resolutions would govern them, if they were sincere.

7. And Satan himself will do all that he can to hinder you when he sees you ready to Resolve. He knows that he must bestirre him now or never. You never put him to it indeed till you are Resolving to forsake him. One block or other he will be sure then to cast in your way; Either he tels you, it is but folly and melancholy to trouble your self with these matters: or that you may be saved without all this ado: or that God is more mercifull then to cast away all that be not Sanctified: or that Godliness doth but trouble and distract people: and that the professours of it are secretly no better then others; and that it is but Hypocrisie for them to make such a stir with their Religion; and that we must be moderate in our Godliness, and take heed of being Godly over much: A hundred such foolish suggestions as these, the Devil hath at hand to cast in your way, when he seeth you ready to Resolve.

If these will not serve, he will set some of his wicked Disciples on rail-

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ing or deriding you! And perhaps some cunning fool a caveling with you, to see if they can overwit you, and draw you back.

If that will not do, perhaps he will open the falls of professours to you, and labour to perswade you that *all are such:* Or he will shew you what divisions and differences are among them; or he will take advantage of some difficulties in Religion, or some controversies in which he sees you already engaged to a party; or he will tell you of some false doctrine that some forward professours may be tainted with, to make them, and consequently Godliness it self more odious, or at least suspected to you. If all this will not do, he will endeavour to set your very parents, or natural kindred against you; that those that should most promote your Salvation, and on whom your livelyhood much dependeth, shall become your enemies, and hate you for offering to give up your selves to Christ: If that will not do, he will endeavour to entice you with the baits of fleshly pleasure, or of preferments, or much business, or merry company, or some great matters that you may hope for in the world.

world. And usually this snare is the strongest of all. Or else he will tell you that if needs you will Resolve it is time enough hereafter: You may yet take more of your pleasure or commodity before you leave it: Yet you may suck the brests of the world a little dryer, and then turn to God and cast it off. If all this will not prevail with you, he will tell you it is now too late; you have sinned so long, or such haynous sinnes that God will not have mercy on you: he will make you believe that God hath utterly forsaken you, and there is no remedy; and you may as well spare your thoughts of Turning now, for Christ will not receive or welcome you: and therefore it is even as good go on, and take up the rest that the world can afford you, for there is no hope of better. But the most desperate temptation of all the rest is, to put some blasphemous, unbelieving thoughts into your mind; especially if you fall into company with infidels, that will draw you to question the Word of God, and the Immortality of the Soul, and the truth of Christianity, or the life to come, whether there be any such things or not: Where these once take, and

and are received with approbation, the Soul is in a miserable case: Though I know many tempted, melancholy Christians, are haunted with such temptations, who yet abhorre them, and do well at last, for all this. Some times also when he cannot take you off from Resolving, he will lead you among some disputing Opinionists, and they shall tise you to take up with their Opinionative Religiousnes instead of true Sanctification, of which I have spoke in the eighth Direction. By these and many such wiles as these, doth the old serpent do all that possibly he can, to hinder you from sound Resolution and Conversion. And therefore you must be armed against his temptations, and meet them with abhorrence; and if you feel them too hard for you, go daily to Christ by Faith and Prayer for renewed strength: and call to your faithfull friends, and Ministers for helpe. Open your case to some one that's able, experienced, and faithfull; that he may help you with Argements to resist those temptations, which you know not how your selves to deale with. God hath appointed Pastours in his Church to be Spiritual Fathers in the Lord; and when

when they have sowed in you the seed of eternall life, they watch over it till they see the blade and fruit: They travaile as in birth of you, till Christ be formed in you. It is their office to help you; and God giveth to them that are faithfull abilitis and affections agreeable to their office. And therefore lean upon the hand of your faithfull guides, and think not to break through temptations alone, and get to Heaven without the means that God hath appointed you.

Having told you the Hinderances, and what to do against them, I shall add but these two words more of *Direction*. 1. *When you are Resolving, give up your selves to God with a Holy Covenant or Vow.* I mean not any *rash vow*, nor any *unnecessary vow*; but the same that you made in *Baptism*, which your age it self doth call you to renew, but your sinnes against it do call you more.

Perhaps you'l say, that you are not able to perform it by your own strength, and you are uncertain of Gods assistance, and therefore how can you promise or vow?

To this I answer: 1. You may be sure that this Objection is frivolous, because

it makes againſt the frequent, expreſs Commands of God, the practice of his Church in all ages, and the nature of Chriſtianity it ſelf: God hath in all Ages been pleaſed to receive men into his ſervice and Church in a Covenant way; and *Baptiſm* it ſelf is our ſolemn Covenanting with him: and the *Lords Supper* is appointed for a ſolemn renewing of it. And indeed it is implicitly and virtually renewed by a true Chriſtian every day of his life. In every duty he gives up himſelf to God: And if he ſhould ceaſe this Heart-covenant, he would ceaſe to be a Chriſtian: For the very eſſence of his Chriſtianity conſiſteth in it. It is his Faith it ſelf.

2. And when you covenant for the time to come, you do not take on you to *foretell* infallibly your own perſeverance; but you *Profeſs* your preſent *conſent* to be Chriſt's, and to continue his, and you engage your ſelves thereto. And ſhould you not chooſe the ſtricteſt engagements: 1. Where there is the greateſt need of them, becauſe of the looſneſs of the heart, and the ſtrength of temptations, that would draw us away; and 2. Where there is the moſt abſolute neceſſity,

necessity, because if we miscarry we are undone: 3. And where you are already obliged by Gods Commands whether you vow or not: 4. And where God hath made your consent to the Obligation of necessity to Salvation. He that intends to keep Covenant, and knows that he must keep it, or be condemned; hath little reason to be loath to make it.

3. And for Gods assistance, you have much more cause to expect it in the way of Covenanting, which himself hath appointed you, then in the neglect of his appointed means.

Object. *But if I did it in Baptism, what need I do it again?*

Answ. I told you the Covenant must be continued and renewed through the whole course of our lives, but especially after a notorious violation of your former promise: You once gave up your selves to God, and you have proved false to him, and it is a wonder of Mercy that ever he will trust you more, or enter any more into Covenant with you: and will you draw back from such Mercy, and such a duty as this?

Object. *But I am afraid of breaking my vows again, and it is better to for-*

bear them, then not to perform them.

Answ. 1. This Reason makes as much against the inward Vow and Resoluion of the heart; so that by this rule you would never be Christians for fear of falling away, and being worse. 2. There is an absolute necessity of your Resolving, and Covenanting, and of Keeping your Resolutions and Covenants: And when it *must be kept*, or you are utterly undone; it's but a madness to refuse to *make* the Covenant for fear of breaking it: For that is but to make choice of an easier place in Hell, for fear of having a worse, if you should resolve for Heaven: When as Heaven is set open before you, and you thus wilfully cast away your hopes. Nay your place in Hell is not like to be the easier, when you thus deliberately, and wilfully refuse the Covenant. 3. Your Resolutions and Holy Vows, are means of Gods appointment to keep you from breaking his imposed Covenant. Is not a Resolved, Engaged, Devoted Christian liker to be accepted, and to persevere, then a waverer that saith, I dare not vow, for fear lest I performe not.

In unnecessary matters I had rather you were too backward to vow. Some will

will vow poverty, and some a single life, and some will vow that they will never drink wine or strong drink more; such vows as these may be good for some, in cases of special necessity, as the last remedies of a dangerous disease; but they are not for *all*, nor *rashly* to be made. But the Resolution and vow of cleaving unto God in Faith and Holy Obedience, and of renouncing the flesh, the world, and the Devil; this is for all, and must be made and kept by all that will be saved.

2. Direct. And as I would have you second your Resolution by a Covenant with God, so would advise you (ordinarily) to go further and *openly Profess the Resolution and Covenant that you have made.* For as *with the heart men believe unto Righteousness, so with the mouth Confession is made unto Salvation*, Rom. 10. 10. Christ will confess those that confess him, and disown, and be ashamed of those that are ashamed of him. When you have escaped the greatest misery in the world, and obtained the greatest Mercy in the world, the greatness of it calleth you to acknowledg it, and give Glory to God. Go to your

old Companions in ſinne, and tell them what God hath revealed to you and done for you! Tell them, *O Sirs, I ſee now that which I never ſaw before: I wonder how I could venture ſo madly upon ſinne! and how I could make light of God, of Chriſt, of death, of Judgment, and Everlaſting life! I have been hitherto your Companion in ſinne, but I would not take the ſame courſe again for all the world: I ſee now there is a better portion hereafter to be obtained, which I was mindleſs of: I ſee now we were all this while making merry at the brink of Hell, and there was but a ſtep between us and death: Now I ſee, that the courſe that we have taken is wicked and deceitfull, and will not ſerve turn: If I ſerve the fleſh, it will reward me but with rottonneſs: I will therefore hereafter ſerve that God, that will certainly reward me with Everlaſting life. I beſeech you Sirs, come away with me, and ſee and try what I have ſeen and tryed: I have lived with you in ſinne, O now let us joyn together in Repentance, and a Holy life: I ſhall be glad of your company to Heaven: but if you will not do it, take your courſe: For my part I am Reſolved; by the Grace of God I am fully Reſolved to be from this day forward*

forward a New man, and never to joyn with you more in a fleshly and ungodly life. Never tempt me or perswade me to it; for I am Resolved.

Thus if you will declare your Resolutions to others, and seek to win them, you may possibly do them good; but however you will be the deeper engaged to God your selves.

Yea, though I would have no ostentation of Conversion, nothing done *rashly in publike*, nor *without the advice of a faithfull Minister beforehand*; yet *with these Cautions*, I must say, that it's a shame that we hear no more in publike of the Conversion of sinners. As *Baptism* is to be in publike, that the Congregation may witness your engagement, and pray for you, and rejoice at the receiving of a member; So the solemn renewing of the same Covenant by Repentance after a wicked life, should ordinarily be in publike, to give warning to others to avoid the sinne, and to give God the honour, and to have the Prayers of the Church, and to satisfy them of our Repentance, that they may have Communion with us. The *Papists* do more offend (of the two) in so much confining Con-

feſſion and Penitence, to the Prieſts eare in ſecret, and not bringing it before the Church, then they do in making a Sacrament of it. I wonder that people ſhould every day thruſt into our hands their requeſts to pray for them when they are ſick, and that it is ſo rare a matter to have any deſire our Prayers, for the pardon of all the ſinnes of their natural, unconverted ſtate.

I would here ſeriouſly adviſe all thoſe that it concerneth that when God hath ſhewed them ſo great a Mercy as to Convert them, and make them New Creatures, they would go to their faithfull Miniſter, and by his advice, put up ſuch a bill as this, *Such a man of this pariſh, having long lived in blindneſs, and deadneſs, and ungodlineſs, (and name the particular ſinnes, if they were publickly known,) and being by the great Mercy of God convinced of his ſinne, and miſery; and ſuſtained with ſome hopes of Mercy by the Blood and Merits of Jeſus Chriſt, and being now Reſolved by the Grace of God, to forſake this fleſhly, worldly life, and to give up himſelf to Chriſt and Holineſs, doth earneſtly intreat the Church to pray for him, that his many, and heinous ſins*

may

may be all forgiven, and that God would againe receive him into Mercy, and that he may hold on in Faith and Holineſs to the laſt, and never turn again to the courſe of his iniquity.

And if the Miniſter think it meet, refuſe not to make your ſelves an open Confeſſion of your former life of ſinne and miſery, and to Profeſs openly your Reſolution to walk with God for the time to come.

This courſe ſhould be more ordinary with us: and if Converſiion it ſelf were not ſo rare, or elſe ſo defective, that it doth too little quicken men to a ſence of duty, and ſinne, and Mercy, or ſo doubtfull, and by ſlow degrees, that it is ſcarce diſcerned by many that have it; were it not for ſome of theſe; more ordinary would it be, to the great rejoycing and benefit of the Church.

The Concluſion. And now I have given you Directions in the moſt great and neceſſary buſineſs in this world; They are ſuch as I received of God, and if Faithfully practiſed will put your Salvation paſt all hazard. But what they have done,

done, or what they will do, I cannot tell; but must leave the Issue to God and you. Its pitty eternall Glory should be lost, for want of yielding to so holy, and sweet, and reasonable a course. It is lamentable to observe, what ignorant, base, unworthy thoughts the most have of the very Office of the holy Ghost, who is the sanctifier of all that God will save. The very *name* of *Regeneration and Sanctification* is not understood by some, and is but matter of derision to others; and the most think that it is another kind of matter then indeed it is. To be baptized, and come to Church, and to say some cold and heartless Prayers, and to forbeare some gross disgracefull sins, is all the Sanctification that most are acquainted with: (and all have not this:) And thus they debase the work of the holy Ghost. If a Prince have built a sumptuous Pallace, and you will shew men a Swine-stie, and say, [*This is the Pallace that the Prince hath bin so long a building*] were not this to abuse him by contempt? If he build a Navy, and you shew a man two or three pig-troughs and say, [*These are the Kings ships*] would he not take it for a scorn? Take heed of such dealing with

with the holy Ghoſt. Remember what it is to believe in the name of the Father, Son, and holy Ghoſt; and remember that you were Baptized into the name of the Father, Son, and holy Ghoſt? And do you not yet know why? nor know the meaning of your Baptiſmall Covenant? It is not only to believe that there are three Perſons in the Trinity, but to conſent to the Relations and duty to them, in reſpect to their ſeveral Relations and works, If the Father had not Created you, how could you have been men? The Lord of nature muſt be acknowledged as the *End* and the governour of nature, and accordingly obeyed. And this is to believe and be Baptized into the Name of God the Father. If the Son had not Redeemed you, you had bin as the Divels were, forſaken and given over to diſpaire. The Purchaſer, Procurer, and Author of Grace, of Pardon, and Salvation muſt be acknoledged to be ſuch, and himſelf and his Salvation accordingly accepted, and his terms ſubmitted to. And this is to believe in the name of the Son, and in baptiſme we make profeſſion hereof. And certainly the work of the holy Ghoſt is as neceſſary to your Salvation.

tion. Without the ſanctifying work of the Spirit, you could never be delivered from ſin and Satan, nor reſtored to Gods Image, and conſequently could never be the Members of Chriſt, nor have any ſaving benefit by his Sufferings. Would you not think him unworthy to live, that would reproach the *Fathers Work of nature*, and ſay that the whole Creation is but ſome poor contemptible work? And would you not think him unworthy the name of a Chriſtian that had contemptible thoughts of the *Sons Redemption*, as if we could be ſaved as well without a Saviour, or as if it were but ſome poor and triviall commodity that Chriſt had purchaſed us? I know you would confeſs the miſtery of that man, that believeth no better in the *Father*, and the *Son*. And how comes it to paſs that you think not of your own miſery, that believe no better in the *holy Ghoſt*? Do not you debaſe the *Sanctifying* office of the holy Spirit, when you ſhew us your knowledg, and parts and outward duties and civility, and tell us that *theſe* are the work of ſanctification? What? is Sanctification but ſuch a thing as this? Why? *Holineſs is a new Life and Spirit in us*: and

theſe

theſe that you talk of are but a few flowers that are ſtickt upon a Corps to keep it a while from ſtinking among men, till death convey it to a buriall in Hell. O Sirs, *Sanctification* is another kind of matter, then the forſaking of ſome of your fouler vices, and ſpeaking well of a Godly life. It is not the patching up of the *Old* man, *but* the Creating of a *New* man. I give you warning therefore from God that you think not baſely of the work of the holy Ghoſt; and that you think no more to be ſaved without the *Sanctifying work of the Spirit*, then without the *redeeming work of the Son*, or *Creation*, *Government*, *or Love of the Father*. Sanctification muſt turn the very bent and ſtream of heart and life to God, to Chriſt, to Heaven; it muſt mortifie Carnall *Self*, and the world to you; it muſt make you a people Devoted, Conſecrated, and Reſigned up to God, with all that you have: it muſt make all ſin odious to you, and make God the Love and Deſire of your Souls; ſo that it muſt give you a new Heart, a new End, a new Maſter, a new Law, and a new Converſation. This is that noble Heavenly work which the holy Ghoſt hath

hath vouchſafed to make the buſineſs of his office: To ſlight and deſpiſe this, is to ſlight and deſpiſe the holy Ghoſt: To refuſe this, is to refuſe the holy Ghoſt, and not to believe in him: to be without this work, is to be without the holy Ghoſt: & *if any man have not the Spirit of Chriſt, the ſame is none of his*, Rom. 8. 9. The *holy Catholick Church*, is compoſed of all through the world that have this work upon them, and therefore it is called Holy. The *Communion of Saints*, is the bleſſed Vitall fellowſhip of theſe *Sanctified* Ones: For *theſe* only is the *Reſurrection* unto bleſſedneſs, & the *life everlaſting* with the Lord of life: for all others is the Reſurrection of Condemnation, & the everlaſting puniſhment.

But if the other two Articles of our Faith, have been ſo denied by the blind, it is leſs wonder if this be ſo. Some Hereticks denied God to be the Creatour of the world; and becauſe they ſaw ſo much evill in the world, they ſaid that it was made by Devils or evill Angels (who indeed made the ſin, but not the world,) So dealt the Jewes by the *Son*, and the *Second* Article of our Faith: The Sacrifice of Bulls and Goats, and ſuch Beaſts, was all the Sacrifice for ſin that they believed

lieved in. And thus deale the multitude of the *ungodly* by the *Spirit*. Indeed they know not themſelves ſufficiently to know the need and worth of Sanctification. They are too whole to value the skill and care of Chriſt or the holy Ghoſt. The inſenſibility of ſpirituall death and miſery, and thinking too lightly of Originall Corruption, and too well of our depraved nature, is both the cauſe of many of the Hereſies of the learned, and of the common contempt of Chriſt, and the Spirit and recovering grace, in all the unregenerate. For it is not poſſible that men ſhould have any deeper ſence of the need or worth of the remedy, then they have of the greatneſs of their ſinne and miſery.

O Sirs; did we not come upon this great diſadvantage to you, that we ſpeak to dead men, that have indeed a naturall life, which doth but take pleaſure in their ſpirituall death; how confidently ſhould we expect to prevaile with you all. But while you think lightly of your diſeaſe, we can expect no better, but that you think as lightly of Chriſt and holineſs, and all the meanes that tend to your recovery, and think of the new man, as the Poets fabled of

of the Promethean race, that it grows out of the earth (of your own poor, sorry purposes and performances) like ordinary plants.

Truly Sirs, I have led you even as farre as I can; and what more to say to you, or what more to do for you to procure your Conversion I do not know. If it had been in my power to have shewed you Heaven and Hell it self, that you might better have known the matters that we speak of, I think I should have done it. But God will not have men live by sense in this life, but by Faith. If I could but help you all to such a knowledge and apprehension of these in visible things, as the worst of you shall have as soon as you are dead, then I should make but little doubt of your Conversion and Salvation. Sure if you had but such a sight, the force of it would so work upon you, that before I went out of the Congregation, you would all cry out that you are *resolved* to be new Creatures. But though this be beyond my power, and though I cannot shew you your great and wonderfull things that every eye here must shortly see; yet I come not to you without a *glass* of Gods own making, and in that

that *glaſs* you may ſee them. *There* if you have but an eye of Faith, you may ſee that God that you have ſo long offended, and that now ſo earneſtly inviteth you to return: There you may ſee that Crucified Chriſt that hath opened you a way for Repentance by his Blood, and pleadeth that Blood with you for the melting of your impenitent, obſtinate hearts. There you may ſee the odious face of ſinne, and the amiable face of Holineſs, which is the Image of God: There you may ſee both Heaven and Hell for all that they are inviſible; and may know what *will* be, and that to all Eternity, as well as what is.

And will not ſuch a ſight in the glaſs of Gods Word, ſerve turn to move thee preſently to give up the trade of ſinning, and to Reſolve before thou ſtir for God? I am now come to the End of this part of my work: if the reading of it have brought thee to the End of thy ungodly, careleſs life, it will be happy for thee, and I ſhall ſo far attain the End of my labour. I have purpoſely put this Direction of the Neceſſity of Reſolution in the laſt place, that I might leave upon thy ſpirit the Reaſons for Reſolution,

that here I have laid down. And now I beſeech thee Reader whoever thou art; with all the earneſtneſs that I am able to uſe with thee, as ever thou wouldeſt ſcape the fruits of all thy ſinne, as ever thou wouldeſt ſee the face of God with comfort, and have him thy reconciled Father in Chriſt; as ever thou wouldeſt have a ſaving part in Chriſt, and have him ſtand thy friend in thy extremities; as ever thou wouldeſt have hope in thy death, and ſtand on the right hand, and be juſtified at Judgment; as ever thou wouldeſt ſcape the day of Vengeance, prepared for the unconverted, and the endleſs miſery that will fall upon all unſanctified Souls, as ſure as the Heaven is over thy head: See that thou *Reſolve* and *Turn* to God, and trifle with him no more. Away with thy old tranſgreſſions; away with thy careleſs, worldly life; away with thy ungodly company; and ſet thy ſelfe preſently to ſeek after thy Saivation with all thy heart, and mind, and might. I tell thee once more, that Heaven and Hell are not matters to be jeſted with; nor to be careleſly thought of, or ſpoken of, or regarded. The God of Heaven ſtands over thee now while

while thou art reading all theſe words, and he ſeeth thy heart whether thou art Reſolved to turn or not. Shall he ſee thee read ſuch urgent Reaſons, and yet wilt not Reſolve? Shall he ſee thee read theſe earneſt requeſts, and yet not Reſolve? What? not to come home to thy God, to thy Father, to thy Saviour, to to thy ſelf, after ſo long and wilfull ſinning? What? not to accept of Mercy, now it is even thruſt into thy hands; when thou haſt neglected, and abuſed Mercy ſo long. O let not the Juſt and Jealous God ſtand over thee, and ſee thee guilty of ſuch wickedneſs? If thou be a Chriſtian ſhew thy ſelf a Chriſtian, and uſe thy belief, and come to God. If thou be a man, ſhew thy ſelf a man, and uſe thy Reaſon, and come away to God. I beſeech thee read over and over again the Reaſons that I have here offered thee, and judge whether a reaſonable man ſhould reſiſt them, and delay an hour to come in to God. I that am now writing theſe lines of Exhortatation to thee, muſt ſhortly meet thee at the barre of Chriſt. I do now adjure thee, and charge thee in the Name of the living God, that thou do not thy ſelf and me that wrong, as

to make me loſe this labour with thee, and that thou put me not to come in as a witneſs againſt thee, to thy coufuſion and condemnation. Reſolve therefore preſently in the ſtrength of Chriſt, and ſtrik an unchangeable Covenant with him: Get thee to thy knees, and bewaile with tears thy former life, and deliver up thy ſelf wholly now to Chriſt; and never break this Covenant more.

If thou lay by the Book, and go away the ſame, and no perſwaſion will do any good upon thee, but unholy thou wilt ſtill be, and ſenſual, and worldly ſtill thou wilt be; I call thy Conſcience to witneſs, that thou waſt warned of the evill that is neer thee; and Conſcience ſhall obey this call, and bear me witneſs whether thou wilt or not: And this Book which thou haſt read, which I intended for thy Converſion and Salvation, ſhall be a witneſs againſt thee: Though age or fire conſume the leaves and lines of it, yet God and Conſcience ſhall bring it to thy memory, and thou ſhalt then be the more confounded to think what Reaſons, and earneſt perſwaſions thou didſt reject in ſo plain, ſo great, and neceſſary a caſe.

But

But if the Holy Ghoſt will now become thy tutor, and at once both put this Book into thy hand, and his Heavenly light into thy underſtanding, and his life into thy heart, and effectually perſwade thee to *Reſolve* and *Turn*, how happy wilt thou be to all Eternity? Make no more words on it; but anſwer my requeſt, as thou wouldeſt do if thou wert in a burning fire, and I intreated thee to come out. Thou haſt long enough grieved Chriſt and his Spirit, and long enough grieved thy friends and Teachers: Reſolve this hour, and Rejoyce them that thou haſt grieved; and now grieve the Devil, that thou haſt hitherto rejoyced; and hereafter grieve the wicked, and thy own deceitfull fleſh, whoſe ſinfull deſires thou haſt hitherto followed: And if thou alſo grieve thy ſelf a little while, by that moderate ſorrow that thy ſinne hath made neceſſary for thee, it will be but a preparative to thy endleſs joyes, and the day is promiſed, and coming apace, when Satan that thou turneſt from, ſhall trouble thee no more, and God that thou turneſt to, ſhall wipe away all tears from thy eyes. And if the reading of this Book, may be but a means

of

of ſo bleſſed an End, as God ſhall have the Glory, ſo when *Chriſt cometh to be glorified in his Saints, and admired in all them that do believe*, (2 Theſ 1. 10.) both thou and I ſhall then partake of the Communication of his Glory; if ſo be that I be ſincere in writing, and thou and I ſincere in obeying the Doctrine of this Book. *Amen.*

July 5.
1657.

FINIS.

Date Due